

THE
POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT,
BART

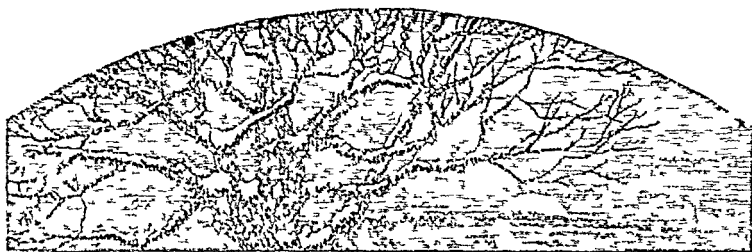
EDITED, WITH A CRITICAL MEMOIR,

BY

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI.

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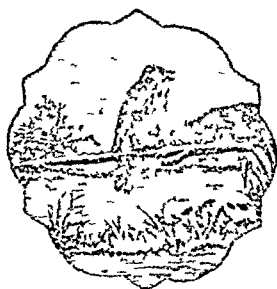
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PREFATORY NOTICE.

WALTER SCOTT is, *pari passu* with Lord Byron (and still more signally in the popular sense), the British-born author of by far the greatest world-wide fame among all who have flourished within a century past. Dickens might be added to their company so far as prose-writing is concerned: the double tria of prose and of poetry belongs to Scott alone among the three.

He was born in Edinburgh on the 15th of August 1771 (the same day of the month as the great Napoleon, but two years later on), and died at Abbotsford, the creation of his own genius and enthusiasm, on the 21st of September 1832. This space of but sixty-one years must always seem short to his admirers for the multifarious product and activity of his life—a life in which literary exertion, though the predominant, was by no means the sole, thing open to the notice of his contemporaries.

Born with a naturally strong constitution, Walter Scott suffered nevertheless much early illness. He had attained the twenty-second month of his infancy when one morning his right leg was found to be powerless and perfectly cold: hence ensued a lameness which proved unsusceptible of cure, and which remained with him all his life. In his fifth year, a lonely contemplative boy, he went to reside with his grandfather at Sandy Knowe on the Tweed, near Kelso, and afterwards to the house of a maiden aunt, who took him off to Bath. This lady had an immense store of tales and legends: she was abundantly ready at imparting them to

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her nephew, and he was still more eager as a listener than she as a narrator. In his eighth year he was removed from a private academy to the High School of Edinburgh, his vigorous, courageous, enjoying character asserted itself and, spite of his lameness, he joined in most of the active sports of the schoolboys. In other matters, his proficiency was nothing noticeable. In October 1783, he was transferred to Edinburgh University. Another casualty befell him about the end of the year 1784. He broke a blood-vessel, and remained confined to his bed for several weeks. In this second period of enforced inactivity, the habit of voracious reading—especially of anything having a romantic or traditional character—became powerfully confirmed. Scott read almost all the romances, old plays, and epics, tales of chivalry, *Cyrus* and *Cassandra*, the novels of modern days—all furnished alike his pabulum, his strong synthetic nature, quick fancy, and enormously retentive memory, assimilated and digested them all (it is said that he was able to repeat the whole of Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope* after a couple of readings). He thus attained an early command of language, and a habit of unceasing work for the diversion of his college chums precluded the holidays was to go out with a friend who had the law taste for tales, and the boys would then recite their wild inventions alternately. Arthur's Seat was a favourite spot for these performances, which were kept secret from the profane. The same tale, of knight-errantry or what not, would be continued from day to day. Nor had his early domestication with his grandfather failed to furnish its quota towards the same general direction of taste and faculty. The old gentleman was a farmer, who lived in habits of semi-patriarchal familiarity with his domestics, and many traits of autochthonous Scotch character were here seen by young Walter—and, if seen, assuredly noted.

In May 1786, relinquishing his wish for a military life to which his lameness was a serious obstacle, he began an apprenticeship to his father, whose avocation was that of a Writer to the Signet, corresponding pretty nearly to an English attorney. This was the ordinary induction to the

career of a Scottish Advocate, or barrister, for which Scott had already made some preliminary studies under Professor Dick. Henceforward his health took a new and stronger turn, and he suffered little from any illness. The father was a strict disciplinarian, and a man of spirit and principle—in religion a Presbyterian precisian, and in law a formalist—the household was regulated on the like pattern. The mother, Anne Rutherford, was daughter of a physician in extensive practice, and Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh University; on the side of both parents, Walter was remotely connected with some ancient Scotch families. Neither of the parents, it may be remarked, had any poetical tendency, nor any noticeable gift of memory, in which their son was so potent.

As Scott advanced in years, he began—perhaps primarily with a view to health—to take long rambles, on foot or on horseback, through the Border and highland counties where his father had relations or clients. He found many an out-of-the-way character, interesting to the feelings or the imagination, remaining from the political troubles of 1745 and the succeeding years—more especially interesting to Walter Scott, who himself came of a Jacobite stock. He saw much also of the lower ranks of society in the agricultural districts. On a visit to a paternal aunt and uncle near Kelso, he first, at the age of thirteen, became acquainted with a book destined to lead to much in his own future career—the Percy Ballads. Fascinated with these, he next read the similar collection by Evans, and that of Scottish Ballads by Herd. In his schooling, though neither brilliant nor diligent, he had made some progress in Latin, moral philosophy, ethics, and history, and he acquired sooner or later an available acquaintance with the German, French, Italian, and Spanish languages. He was no adept in Greek, and in later life had forgotten even its alphabet. The same visit to the neighbourhood of Kelso had a powerful share in awakening the interest, so conspicuous in all his writings, to the beauties and influences of natural scenery.

An enquirer into the early traces of Scott's writing faculty may note some class-exercises which he composed under Dugald Stewart in 1790, and three essays which he read in

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the Edinburgh Speculative Society in 1792-93 His subjects were the Manners and Customs of the Northern Nations of Europe, the Origin of the Feudal System, the Origin of the Scandinavian Mythology, and the Authenticity of Ossian's Poems—all of them themes entirely germane to the future bent of his genius At an earlier date he had written an essay maintaining Ariosto to be a better poet than Homer hence Dr Dalziel had pronounced the rather precarious prophecy that “dunce he was, and dunce he would remain” This was a period of much intellectual activity in Edinburgh the men who afterwards founded the *Edinburgh Review* were contemporaries of Scott

The latter had made some attempts in verse even before reading Percy's *Reliques* Some lines on the Setting Sun are dated in July 1783, some on Mount Aetna still earlier 1782, and, towards the completion of his sixteenth year, he is said to have executed a poem in four books on the Conquest of Granada, which however he burned almost immediately At the house of Professor Ferguson, about 1786, he had seen Burns, and had been impressed, as was befitting, by the view of the great poet of Scottish life, of whose successors he was destined to be the chief For a period of about ten years, however, his rhyming propensities remained in abeyance they were at length reawakened by reading the ballads of Matthew Gregory Lewis, to whose *Tales of Wonder* he afterwards contributed Towards the same time, in 1788, a lecture delivered by Henry Mackenzie turned his attention to the German language This he studied, but only in a desultory way, up to 1793 or 94, when Miss Aiken (afterwards Mrs Baird) brought to his notice some of the poems of Burger Hence resulted his earliest published poem—the *Helen and William* paraphrased from that author's *Linnor*, and issued in 1796, along with the *Wild Huntsman*, also from Burger

Scott had never acted with any regularity as clerk in his father's legal business, he was constantly absent on the jaunts in which he so greatly delighted, and, when in the office, chess-playing divided his attention with law In 1791, he finally resolved to adopt the profession of an Advocate and recommenced his attendance at the Colleg

classes, but with some interruption from illness. In the same year he was admitted by the Faculty of Advocates to his first trials, in July 1792, he passed the residuc, and was called to the bar, where he practised for a few years only. He showed himself active in the private business of the Faculty, and in the work of the Speculative Society. In the Civil Court he made only one professional appearance, but several in the Court of Justiciary, for which he was diligent in preparation,—nor was there any lack of energy or of pushing talent in his general business-habits. In several prosecutions for riot he appeared as counsel for the defendants. He also came forward prominently in organizing, more especially in the character of Quarter-master, a volunteer corps of horse, the Royal Edinburgh Light Dragoons, to act in case of French invasion or other sudden demand. In December 1799, he obtained, through the interest of the Melville and Buccleuch families, the appointment of Sheriff Depute of Selkirkshire, which brought him in £300 per annum, in 1806, the more lucrative post of one of the Principal Clerks of the Court of Session, an office which still left him a good deal of leisure, and from which he did not retire till almost the close of his life, November 1830. The full emoluments of this clerkship (about £1300 per annum) did not accrue to him until the year 1812. He had already, since 1797, been in possession of a small landed property, to which he succeeded on the death of an uncle. At the end of the same year, 24th December, and soon after a disappointment in love with a Perthshire lady, he had married Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpenter, a lady of French birth and connections, and with a moderate fortune, whom he met at the Cumbrian watering-place of Gilsland. Scott was thus a man more than tolerably prosperous in worldly circumstances, even apart from the large gains which his writings soon began to produce. About the date of publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1805, he had a clear income of at least £1000 a year. Neither money nor position was to him an object of indifference. He had a strong and growing ambition for aristocratic society—with which, indeed, (as already observed), he was partly connected by birth. The young couple lived at first, on the happiest terms, in a cottage

at Lasswade Afterwards they dwelt at Ashestiel, a beautiful spot on the Tweed, as the Sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire was bound to reside in that county during some part of the year

From an early stage of his career of authorship—a career pre-eminently successful and famous from first to last—Scott resolved, with the prudence of a clear-sighted professional man, and of a man of the world to whom writing was only one outlet or expression of a wide and generous interest in life, that he would use literature “as a staff, not as a crutch” In 1799 he published his translations of Gothe’s *Gotz von Berlichingen*, and circulated privately his ballads of *Glenfinlas* and *The Eve of St John*. The translation of *Gotz* brought him in the moderate profit of £25, 5s the critics received it well, but the public remained chilly His recognised and substantial position as an author can scarcely be said to have begun until he published in 1802 the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, including some of his own imitations of the old ballad-poetry, along with forty traditional pieces never before published, and much prose illustration A third volume of the work came out in 1803 He had paid, towards the beginning of the century, several visits to Liddisdale, and to Teviotdale, a locality then little known here he collected many traditionary songs, and amassed besides a stock of observations afterwards utilised in the novel of *Guy Mannering* indeed, he had been a collector of ballads, in one way or another, from very early youth With the *Border Minstrelsy* commenced also his connection with commercial speculation in literature, a connection which told for much in his shining prosperity of after years, but which at last proved the wreck of all his fortunes Mr James Ballantyne then editor of a Kelso newspaper, received from his old schoolfellow Scott, and accepted, the offer to print the *Border Minstrelsy* he procured for the purpose a new and fine fount of types, and the handsome appearance of the volumes established the reputation of the so called ‘Border press’ Mr Ballantyne shortly removed to Edinburgh, and set up business as a printer on a large scale, in secret partnership with Scott, whose share in the 1815/55, 1/3 one third The latter visited London in 1803,

and managed to be on good terms with political opponents, as well as sympathisers. He was again in London, and also in Paris in 1826.

With the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, Walter Scott became a distinguished man—it was the best possible preparation for his fame as a poet in his own right, and on an extensive scale. It was first succeeded by an edition of *Sir Tristram*, a poem written about A.D. 1280, and ascribed to Thomas the Rhymer (of Ercildoune). Scott added to the composition some completing lines of his own. In January 1805 he published the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, the first draught of which, in its present shape, had been written in the autumn of 1802—it was received with a tumult of applause, easily accounted for, not only by its very considerable excellences of poetic work, but especially by the novelty of its scene and treatment, and its romantic attraction. Scott was, indeed, the first man of that epoch to make poetry the rage. Altogether, nearly 44,000 copies of the *Lay* had sold before the issue of the annotated edition of 1830. Readers were delighted to find some new source of interest opened up to them in poetry, jaded with the old subjects and the old methods—with whatsoever was recognised and right, respectable and conventional, the old clothes now threadbare, and the old viands now destructive of appetite—they got at last something fresh, full of stimulation in itself, and in the evidence which it everywhere presented of a lively, hearty, buoyant, and rejoicing nature, open to all impressions of the strength and sentiment of the past, and reproducing them in forms eminently quick-blooded. *Marmion*, issued in 1808, confirmed Scott's renown as a poet, and deserved to do so, at portions of it, Scott, though mostly not a careful writer, worked with earnest application. He received £1000 for the poem from its publishers. His fame rose still higher, and attained its culmination, with the publication, in May 1810, of the *Lady of the Lake*—which readers of the present day will be apt, however, to pronounce the least valuable work of the three. Twenty thousand copies sold in a few months. Its pictures of Highland scenery, valour, and manners, naturally made it immensely attractive at the time, and produced a huge effect in popularising the Highlands among tourists of an

for Scotland. He began writing his romance in 1805, and had produced some seven chapters or so, but an unfavourable judgment by a friend led him to set it aside. When ultimately it appeared, it made rapid progress to fame, and, as we all know, this novel and its successors (*Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, and others of later date) soon achieved an unbounded popularity. At the very first, Scott was not suspected to be the author; but surmise soon began to cling to his person, and strengthened as years elapsed, and, long before the actual avowal, he was thoroughly recognised as one with the "Great Unknown." This avowal was made in 1827, at the annual dinner of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund Association. policy, not unmingled with caprice, had sealed his lips till then. The novels, of which it is not my function to offer here any account or any estimate, continued with little intermission to pour forth from the press from 1814 to 1826, and again from 1828 onwards.

Besides poetry and romance, Scott was sufficiently active in other walks of literature. He contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* at its commencement, but quitted it in consequence of divergences of political opinion, and took a warm interest in the establishment of the *Quarterly*. His trade connection with the Ballantynes, and, through them, with Constable and other publishers, led him to project many publications, in which he bore his part as editor or contributor. His *Life of Dryden* was published in 1808, that of Swift in 1814, both of them accompanying editions of the author's works. Besides these, he produced the biographical and critical preface to the Ballantyne Collection of English Novelists, and annotations to Sadler's Correspondence, and other such books, *Parish's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, the articles on Chivalry, Romance, and the Drama, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, some papers of Tory politics in a weekly journal named *The Beacon*, an *Account of the Regalia of Scotland*, and several letters, signed "Malachi Malagrowther," opposing the equalisation of the Scottish and English monetary systems. As in whatever he did, there is, in productions of the critical class by Scott, a manly straightforward character, more conspicuous than any quality of subtlety or original insight.

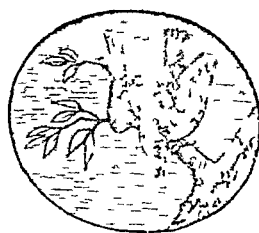
Famous, fully occupied, happy in domestic life, surrounded by numerous friends and acquaintances, wealthy and loving society, Scott seemed one of the most fortunate of men. He had a rather work-minded ambition—did not live like a feudal lord, and for a while he resided it with considerable *éclat*. In 1811 he bought a hundred acres of moorland on the Tweed, near Melrose—moorland bleak and bare—for which he gave £4000. “Castle Hole” did not sound so well as “Abbotsford” he called it by the latter name, and about 1814 left his residence at Ashestiel for the house of Abbotsford, which he rebuilt. He filled it with costly and curious odds and ends of all sorts, exercised a large hospitality, and endeavoured to revive the aspect of the olden times. Many other purchases of land followed, at heavy prices. Fully £20,000 were spent on the mansion and garden. Scott’s baronetcy was conferred in 1820. A triumph which culminates in a reception of George the Fourth cannot be a triumph of a highly exalted kind. Such was the case with Walter Scott, who took a prominent part in the festivities of the King’s visit to Edinburgh in August 1822. But the term of all these brilliances was at hand. The publishers with whom Scott was so closely connected, Constable and the Ballantynes, were men of talent, but unduly enterprising from the first, their undertakings went beyond their capital, and their speculations increased with their perils. Scott was not only a partner with the printer James Ballantyne to the extent of one third, but also to the same extent with a younger brother, the publisher John Ballantyne. The latter partnership dated from 1808, the former from 1805. The commercial crisis of 1825-26 precipitated, but did not in fact cause, the collapse of these firms. All of them became bankrupt in January of the latter year. It turned out that Scott was indebted to Constable’s creditors, as a partner in the firm of Ballantyne & Co, to the extent of nearly £72,000, about half of which sum was included in the debts of the firm itself. Besides this, there were other liabilities of the partnership amounting to about £110,000, so that Scott’s personal debt reached a total of something like £147,000. That he had been rash is admitted on all hands. He undertook work on a loose and

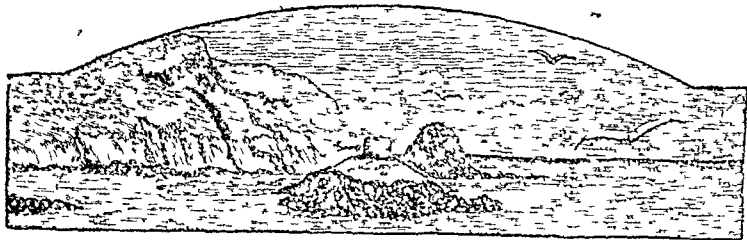
precarious system, having, from or even before the year 1823, contracted to produce novels, and taken payment for them in bills, now become valueless, before so much as fixing on their subject-matter. He showed a bold front to adversity. "Time and I against any two," said he to his creditors. He expressed his confident hope of paying all, surrendered the whole of his property, executed a trust-deed in favour of certain gentlemen who were to receive the proceeds of his future labours, and to pay off his debts by instalments with interest. He sold his splendid house and furniture, took lodgings, and turned to once more at hard writing. He expressed to a friend his sense of how hard it was to lose all, and be poor at last, but said that he hoped yet to retrieve all within a few years.

The works that Scott wrote subsequently to this great reverse, which overtook him at about fifty-five years of age, naturally want buoyancy. They include the *History of Napoleon*, 1827, which had been begun before the wreck of his fortunes, the *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, the *Tales of a Grandfather*, (or episodes of Scottish History), 1827-28, the Scottish History in *Lardner's Cyclopædia*, the notes to his collected works in 1829. His health did not long endure the strain. In February 1830 symptoms of paralysis supervened. A severer stroke of the same malady came in April 1831. Still he continued writing many hours a day. His strenuous exertions had practically achieved their purpose: the debts were much diminished even before the close of his life, (he paid six shillings in the pound the year after publishing the *Life of Napoleon*, and had in four years paid £70,000), and the after-sale of his collected works finally wiped them out. The troubles which beset himself personally were aggravated by the aspect of public affairs, then gloomy and ominous enough to so staunch a Tory as Scott: yet he was partially cheered by the consciousness of the great progress he was making towards clearing off his debts, and by the tender affection of his children. In the hope of improving his health, he went abroad, sailing from Portsmouth on the 27th of October 1831. He landed in Naples on the 17th of December, remained there till the 16th of April, and then went on to Rome and other places. Finding his strength

tameness even in his distinctively spirited passages. His phrases, when you pause upon them, are full of commonplace. The reason of this is that Scott was very little of a literary-poetic artist. greatness of expression—the heights and depths of language and of sound—were not much in his way. He respected his subject much more than he respected his art. after consulting and satisfying his own taste and that of his public, the thing had to do well enough. Scott has always been the poet of youthful and high-hearted readers. there seems to be no reason why he should not continue indefinitely to meet their requirements, and certainly they will be considerable losers if ever, in the lapse of time and shifting of poetic models, his compositions should pass out of ready currency. He is not, and never can be, the poet of literary readers. the student and the artist remember him as a cherished enchantment of their youth, and do not recur to him. Neither the inner recesses of thought nor the high places of art thrill to his appeal. But it is highly possible for the critical tendency and estimate to be too exclusively literary, the poetry of Scott is mainly amenable to a different sort of test, and to that it responds not only adequately but triumphantly.

W. M. ROSSETTI.





SCOTT'S POETICAL WORKS

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

"Dum relego, scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno,
Me quoque, qui feci, iudice, digna lini"

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES, EARL OF DALKEITH,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION, 1805

THE Poem now offered to the Public is intended to illustrate the customs and manners, which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants, living in a state partly pastoral and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the Author, than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the ancient metrical romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude, in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which, in some degree, authorises the changes of rhythm in the text. The machinery also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a poem, which did not partake of the rudeness of the old Ballad, or Metrical Romance.

For these reasons, the Poem was put into the mouth of an ancient Minstrel, the last of the race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry, without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the personages actually flourished. The time occupied by the action is three nights and three days.

INTRODUCTION

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old,
His withered cheek, and tresses gray,
Seemed to have known a better day,
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

The last of all the Bards was he,
 Who sung of Border chivalry,
 For, well-a-day! their date was fled,
 His tuneful brethren all were dead,
 And he, neglected and oppressed,
 'Wished to be with them, and at rest
 No more, on prancing palfrey borne,
 He carolled, light as lark at morn,
 No longer, courted and caressed,
 High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
 He poured, to lord and lady gay,
 'The unpremeditated lay
 'Old times were changed, old manners gone,
 'A stranger filled the Stuarts' throne,
 The bigots of the iron time
 Had called his harmless art a crime
 A wandering harper, scorned and poor,
 He begged his bread from door to door,
 And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
 The harp a King had loved to hear

He passed where Newark's stately tower
 Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower
 The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
 No humbler resting-place was nigh
 With hesitating step, at last,
 The embattled portal arch he passed,
 Whose ponderous grate, and massy bar,
 Had oft rolled back the tide of war,
 But never closed the iron door
 Against the desolate and poor
 The Duchess marked his weary pace,
 His timid mien, and reverend face,
 And bade her page the menials tell,
 That they should tend the old man well.
 For she had known adversity,
 Though born in such a high degree,
 In pride or power, in beauty's bloom,
 Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb!

When kindness had his wants supplied,
 And the old man was gratified,
 Began to rise his minstrel pride
 And he began to talk, anon,
 Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
 And of Earl Walter, rest him, God!
 A braver ne'er to battle rode
 And how full many a tale he knew,
 Of the old warriors of Buccleuch,
 And, would the noble Duchess deign
 To listen to an old man's strain,
 Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
 He thought e'en yet, the sooth to speak,



" The pitying Duchess p'aised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time "

That, if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear

The humble boon was soon obtained;
The Aged Minstrel audience gained
But, when he reached the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
Perchance he wished his boon denied,
For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease,
Which marks security to please,
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony
And then, he said, he would full fain
He could recall an ancient strain,
He never thought to sing again
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dimes and mighty eails,
He had played it to King Charles the Good
When he kept court at Holyrood,
And much he wished, yet feared, to try
The long-forgotten melody

Amid the stings his fingers strayed,
And an uncertain warbling made—
And oft he shook his hoary head
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face, and smiled,
And lightened up his faded eye,
With all a poet's ecstasy
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along:
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot.
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost
Each blank, in faithless memory void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied,
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LASTEST MINSTREL sung

CANTO FIRST.

- I THE feast was over in Brinksome tower
And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower,
Her bower, that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
Jesu Maria, shield us well!

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

- No living wight save the Ladye alone,
Had dared to cross the threshold stone
- 2 The tables were drawn, it was idlerse all,
Knight, and page, and household squire
Loitered through the lofty hall,
Or crowded round the ample fire
The stag hounds, werry with the chase
Lay stretched upon the rushy floor,
And urged, in dreams, the forest race,
From Teviot stone to Esl dale moor.
- 3 Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall,
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
Brought them their steeds from boyer to stall;
Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall,
Waited, duteous, on them all
They were all knights of metal true,
Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch
- 4 Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword and spur on heel,
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night
They lay down to rest
With corslet laced,
Pillowed on buckler cold and hard,
They curved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet
barred
- 5 Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
And with Jedwood-axe at saddle bow
A hundred more red fire in stall —
Such was the custom of Branksome Hall
- 6 Why do these steeds stand ready, dight?
Why watch these warriors, armed, by night?
They watch, to heu the blood-hound baying,
They watch to hear the war-horn braying,
To see St George's red cross streaming,
To see the midnight Beacon gleaming,
They watch, against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle
- 7 Such is the custom of Branksome Hall
Many a valiant knight is here,
But he, the Chieftain of them all,

His sword hangs rusting on the wall,
 Beside his broken spear
 Bards long shall tell,
 How Lord Walter fell!
 When startled burghers fled, afar,
 The furies of the Border war,
 When the streets of high Dunedin *the city*
 Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
 And heard the slogan's deadly yell—
 Then the Chief of Branksome fell

Can piety the discord heal, *the death-feud's*
 Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?
 Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,
 Can love of blessed charity? *the*
 No! vainly to each holy shrine,
 In mutual pilgrimage, they drew,
 Implored, in vain, the grace divine
 For chiefs their own red falchions slew
 While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,
 While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
 The slaughtered chiefs, the mortal jar,
 The havoc of the feudal war,
 Shall never, never be forgot!

In sorrow, o'er Lord Walter's *lure*—
 The wailike foresters had bent,
 And many a flower, and many a tear,
 Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent
 But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
 The Lady dropped nor flower nor tear!
 'Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the shroud,
 Had locked the source of softer woe,
 And burning pride, and high disdain,
 Forbade the rising tear to flow,
 Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
 Her son hipped from the nurse's knee—
 "And, if I live to be a man,
 My father's death revenged shall be!"
 Then fast the mother's tears did seek
 To dew the infant's kindling cheek

10 All loose her negligent attire,
 All loose her golden hair,
 Hung Margaret o'er her slaughtered sire,
 And wept in wild despair
 But not alone the bitter tear
 Had filial grief supplied,
 For hopeless love, and anxious fear,
 Had lent their mingled tide
 Nor in her mother's altered eye
 Dared she to look for sympathy
 Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

- With Carr in arms had stood,
When Malhouse burn to Melrose ran
All purple with their blood
And well she knew, her mother dread,
Before Lord Cranstoun she should wed,
Would see her on her dying bed
- 11 Of noble race the Lady came,
Her father was a clerk of fame,
Of Bethune's line of Picardie
He learned the art, that none may name.
In Padua, far beyond the sea
Men said, he changed his mortal frame
By feat of magic mystery,
For when, in studious mood, he paced
St Andrew's cloistered hall,
His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall
- 12 And of his skill, as bards now,
He taught that Ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
The viewless forms of air
And now she sits in secret bower,
In old Lord David's western tower,
And listens to a heavy sound,
That moans the mossy turrets round
Is it the roar of Teviot's tide,
That chafes against the scur's red side?
Is it the wind that swings the oaks?
Is it the echo from the rocks?
What may it be, the heavy sound,
That moans old Branksome's turrets round?
- 13 At the sullen, moaning sound,
The ban-dogs bay and howl,
And, from the turrets round,
Loud whoops the startled owl
In the hall, both squire and knight
Swore that a storm was near,
And looked forth to view the night,
But the night was still and clear
- 14 From the sound of Teviot's tide,
Chafing with the mountain's side,
From the groan of the wind-swung oak,
From the sullen echo of the rock,
From the voice of the coming storm,
The Ladye knew it well!
It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke,
And he called on the Spirit of the Fell
- RIVER SPIRIT
- 15 "Sleepest thou, brother?"
-

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

———"Brother, my—
 On my hills the moon-beams play
 From Craik-cross to Skelfhill-pen,
 By every rill, in every glen,
 Merry elves their morrice pacing,
 To aerial minstrelsy,
 Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
 Trip it delf and merrily
 Up, and mark their nimble feet!
 Up, and list their music sweet!"

RIVER SPIRIT

- 16 "Tears of an imprisoned maiden
 Mix with my polluted stream,
 Margaret of Branksome, sorrow-laden,
 Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam
 Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,
 When shall cease these feudal jars?
What shall be the maiden's fate?
 Who shall be the maiden's mate?"

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

- "Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,
 In utter darkness round the pole,
 The Northern Bear lowers black and grim,
 Orion's studded belt is dim,
 Twinkling faint, and distant far,
 Shimmers through mist each planet star,
 Till may I read their high decree
 But no kind influence deign they shower
 On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,
 Till pride be quelled, and love be free"
- 18 The unearthly voices ceased,
 And the heavy sound was still,
 It died on the river's breast,
 It died on the side of the hill—
 But round Lord David's tower
 The sound still floated near,
 For it rung in the Ladye's bowei,
 And it rung in the Ladye's ear
 She raised her stately head,
 And her heart throbbed high with pride—
 "Your mountains shall bend,
 And your streams ascend,
 Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!"
- 19 The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
 Where many a bold retainer lay,
 And, with jocund din, among them all,
 Her son-pursued his infant play
 A fancied moss-trooper, the boy
 The truncheon of a spear bestrode.
 And round the hall, right merrily,

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

- In mimic fory rode
Even bearded knights, in arms grown old,
Share in his frolic gambols bore,
Albeit their hearts, of rugged mould,
Were stubborn as the steel they wore
For the gray warriors prophesied,
How the brave boy, in future war,
Should tame the Unicorn's pride,
Erealt the Crescents and the Star
- 20 The Ladye forgot her purpose high,
One moment, and no more,
One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
As she paused at the arched door
Then, from amid the armed train,
She called to her William of Deloraine
- 21 A stark moss trooping Scot was he,
As e'er couched Border lance by knee
Through Solway sands, through Tarras moss,
Blindfold, he knew the paths to cross,
By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds,
In Eske, or Liddel, fords were none,
But he would ride them, one by one,
Alike to him was time, or tide,
December's snow, or July's pride,
Alike to him was tide, or time,
Moonless midnight, or matin prime
Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
As ever drove prey from Cumberland,
Five times outlawed had he been,
By England's king and Scotland's queen
- 22 "Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,
Mount thee on the mightiest steed,
Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,
Until thou come to fair Tweedside,
And in Melrose's holy pile
Seek thou the Monk of St Mary's aisle
Greet the father well from me,
Say, that the fated hour is come,
And to-night he shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb
For this will be St Michael's night,
And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright,
And the Cross, of bloody red,
Will point to the grave of the mighty dead
- 23 "What he gives thee, see thou keep,
Stay not thou for food or sleep
Be it scroll, or be it book,
Into it, I night, thou must not look,
If thou readest, thou art lorn!
Better hadst thou ne'er been born"
-

- 24 "O swiftly can speed my dapple-gray steed,
Which drinks of the Teviot cleu,
Ere break of day," the warrior 'gan say,
"Again will I be here
And safer by none may thy errand be done,
Than, noble dame, by me,
Letter nor line know I never a one,
Were't my neck-verse at Hauribee "
- 5 Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
And soon the steep descent he passed,
Soon cross'd the sounding byburn,
And soon the Teviot side he won
Lastward the wooded path he rold,
Green hazels o'er his brisnet nod
He pass'd the Peel of Coldiland,
And cross'd old Borthwick's rowing strand;
Dimly he view'd the Mort-hill's mound,
Where Druid shades still flitted round;
In Hawick twinkled many a light,
Behind him soon they set in night,
And soon he spurred his courser keen
Beneath the tower of Hazeldean
- 26 The clattering hoofs, the watchmen mark,—
"Stand, ho! thou courier of the dark "
"For Branksome, hō!" the knight rejoiced,
And left the friendly tower behind
He turned him now from Teviotside,
And, guided by the tinkling rill,
Northward the dark ascent did ride
And gazed the moor at Houshehill,
Broad on the left before him lay,
For many a mile, the Roman way
- 27 A moment now he slack'd his speed,
A moment breathed his panting steed,
Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band,
And loosened in the sheath his brand
On Minto crags the moon-beams glint,
Where Barnhill hewed his bed of flint,
Who flung his outlawed limbs to rest,
Where falcons hung their giddy nest,
'Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye
I or many a league his prey could spy.
Cliffs, doubling, on their echoes borne,
The terrors of the robber's horn,
Cliffs, which, for many a later year,
The warbling Doric reed shall hear,
When some sad swain shall teach the grove,
Ambition is no cure for love
- 28 Unchallenged, thence pass'd De'orune
To ancient Riddell's fane domain,

Where Aill, from mountains freed,
Down from the lake did rushing come—
Each wave was crested with foam,
Like the mane of a chequered steed.
In vain! no torrent, deep or broad,
Might bar the bold man's trooper road.

- 29 At the first plunge the horse sank in,
And the water broke o'er the warrior's head,
Above the foaming tide, I ween,
Scarcely half the charger's neck was seen,
For he was braced from counter to foil,
And the ruler was aimed complete in his hold,
Never heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent's force—
The warrior's very plume, I say,
Was daggled by the dashing spray.
Yet, through good heart, and our Lady's grace
At length he gained the landing place.

- 30 Now Bowden Moor the marchman won,
And sternly shook his plumed head,
As glanced his eye o'er Halidon,
For on his soul the slaughter red
Of that unhallowed morn' arose,
When first the Scott and Carr were foes,
When royal James beheld the fray,
Prize to the victor of the day,
When Home and Douglas in the van
Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,
Till gallant Cressford's heart-blood drench'd
Reeked on dark Elliot's Bonder spear.

- 31 In bitter mood he spurred fast,
And soon the hated hearth was passed,
And far beneath in lustre wan,
Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran
Like some tall rock, with lichens grey,
Seemed, dim'y huge, the dark Abbaye.
When Hawick he passed, hark curfew-rang,
Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung
The sound, upon the fitful gale,
In solemn woe did rise and fall,
Like that wild harp, whose magic tone
Is wakened by the winds alone
But when Melrose he reached, 'twas silence all
He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
And sought the convent's lonely wall

HERE paused the harp, and with its swell
The Master's fire and courage fell
Dejectedly, and low, he bowed,
And, grazing timid on the crowd,
He seemed to seek, in every eye,

If they approach his minstrelsy,
And, dost thou of present praise
Somewhat be spoke of former days,
And how old age and wandering long,
Had done his hand and harp some wrong.

The Duchess, and her daughters fair,
And every gentle hie there,
Each after each, in due degree
Gave praises to his melody,
His hand was true, his voice was clear,
And much they longed the rest to hear
Encouraged thus, the Aged Man,
After meet rest, again began

CANTO SECOND

1. If thou wouldst view far Melrose aught,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight,
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to stoil it, the ruins gray
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white,
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower,
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebony and ivory,
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die,
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owl to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St David's ruined pile;
And, home returning, soothingly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!
2. Short halt did Delorune make there,
Little recked he of the scene so fair
With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong, *and me*
He struck full loud, and struck full long
The porter hurried to the gate—
“Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late?”—
“Thom Branksome I,” the warrior cried,
And straight the wicket opened wide.
For Branksome's chiefs had in battle stood,
To fence the rights of fair Melrose,
And lands and livings, many a rood,
Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose
- 3 Bold Delorune his errand sad,
The porter bent his humble head,
With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
And noiseless step, the path he trod.

The arch'd cloisters, far and wide,
 Rang to the warrior's clanking stride,
 Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
 He entered the cell of the ancient priest,
 And lifted his barred aventyle,
 To hail the Monk of St Mary's aisle.

- 4 "The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me,
 Says, that the fated hour is come,
 And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
 To win the treasure of the tomb"—

From sackcloth couch the Monk arose,
 With toil his stiffened limbs he reared,
 A hundred years had slung their snows
 On his thin locks and flowing beard

- 5 And strangely on the Knight looked he,
 And his blue eyes gleamed wild and wide,—
 "And, darest thou, Warrior! seek to see
 What heaven and hell alike would hide?
 My bicast, in belt of iron pent,
 With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn,
 For threescore years, in penance spent,
 My knees those flinty stones have worn,
 Yet all too little to atone
 For knowing what should ne'er be known
 Wouldst thou thy every future year
 In ceaseless prayer and penance dree,
 Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
 Then, daring Warrior, follow me"

- 6 "Penance, father, will I none,
 Prayer know I hardly one,
 For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
 Save to patter an Ave Mary,
 When I ride on a Border foray
 Other prayer can I none,
 So speed me my errand, and let me be gone"

- 7 Again on the Knight looked the Churchman old,
 And again he sighed heavily,
 For he had himself been a warrior bold,
 And fought in Spain and Italy
 And he thought on the days that were long since by,
 When his limbs were strong, and his courage was high—
 Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
 Where, cloistered round, the garden lay,
 The pillared arches were over their head,
 And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead

- 8 Spreading herbs, and flowrets bright,
 Glistened with the dew of night,
 Nor herb, nor flowret, glistened there,
 But was carved in the cloister arches as fair
 The Monk gazed long on the lovely moon,

Then into the night he looked forth,
 And red and bright the streamers light
 Were dancing in the glowing north
 So had he seen, in fair Castile,
 The youth in glittering squadrons start,
 Sudden the flying jennet wheel,
 And hail the unexpected dart

He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
 That sprints were riding the northern light

- 9 By a steel-clenched postern door,
 They entered now the chancel tall,
 The darkened roof rose high aloof
 On pillars, lofty, and light, and small,
 The key-stone, that locked each ribbed aisle,
 Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille,
 The corbels were carved grotesque and grim,
 And the pillars, with clustered shafts-so trim
 With base and with capital flourished around
 Seemed bundles of lances which garlands had bound

- 10 Full many a scutcheon and banner, riven,
 Shook to the cold night-wind of heaven,
 Around the screened altar's pale,
 And there the dying lamps did burn,
 Before thy low and lonely urn,
 O gallant Chief of Otterburne,
 And thine, dark Knight of Liddesdale!
 O fading honours of the dead!
 O high ambition, lowly laid!

- 11 The moon on the east oriel shone,
 Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
 By foliated tracery combined,
 Thou wouldst have thought some fairy's hand,
 Twined poplars straight the osier wand,
 In many a flourish knot, had twined,
 Then framed a spell, when the work was done
 And changed the willow-wreaths to stone
 The silver light, so pale and faint,
 Showed many a prophet, and many a saint
 Whose image on the glass was dyed,
 Full in the midst, his Cross of Red
 Triumphant Michael brandished,
 And trampled the Apostate's pride
 The moon-beam kissed the holy pane,
 And threw on the pavement a bloody stain

They sate them down on a marble stone,
 A Scottish monarch slept below,
 Thus spoke the Monk in solemn tone -
 "I was not always a man of woe,
 For Prynne countries I have trod,
 And fought beneath the Cross of God,

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,
And thou iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

- 13 "In these far clunes, it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott,
A wizard of such dreaded fame,
That when, in Salamander's cave,
Him listed his magic wand to wave,
The bells would ring in Notre Dame!
Some of his skill he taught to me,
And, Warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone
But to speak them were a deadly sin,
And for having but thought them my heart within,
A treble penance must be done
- 14 "When Michael lay on his dying bed,
His conscience was awakened,
He bethought him of his sinful deed,
And he gave me a sign to come with speed
I was in Spain when the morning rose,
But I stood by his bed ere evening close
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid,
They would rend this Abbey's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave
- 15 "I swore to bury his Mighty Book,
That never mortal might therein look;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at his chief of Branksome's need,
And when that need was past and o'er,
Again the volume to restore
I buried him on St Michael's night,
When the bell tolled one and the moon was bright,
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stained red,
That his patron's Cross might over him wave,
And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave
- 16 "It was a night of woe and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid
Strange sounds along the chancel passed,
The banners waved without a blast,"—
Still spoke the Monk, when the bell tolled one!—
"I tell you, that a braver man
Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurred a steed,
Yet somewhat was he chilled with dread,
And his hair did bristle upon his head
- 17 "Lo Warrior! now, the Cross of Red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead

Within it burns a wondrous light,
 To chase the spirits that love the night
 That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
 Until the eternal doom shall be"—
 Slow moved the Monk to the broad flag-stone
 Which the bloody Cross was traced upon.
 He pointed to a secret nook,
 An iron bar the Warrior took,
 And the Monk made a sign with his withered hand
 The grave's huge portal to expand

- 18 With beating heart to the task he went,
 His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent,
 With bar of iron heaved amain,
 Till the toil-drops fell from his brows, like rain.
 It was by dint of passing strength,
 That he moved the massy stone at length
 I would you had been there, to see
 How the light broke forth so gloriously,
 Streamed upward to the chancel roof,
 And through the galleries far aloof!
 No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright
 It shone like heaven's own blessed light,
 And, issuing from the tomb,
 Showed the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,
 Danced on the dark-brow'd Warrior's mail,
 And kissed his waving plume

- 19 Before their eyes the Wizard lay,
 As if he had not been dead a day
 His hoary beard in silver rolled,
 He seemed some seventy winters old,
 A palmer's amice wrapt him round,
 With a wrought Spanish aldric bound,
 Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea
 His left hand held his Book of Might,
 A silver cross was in his right,
 The lamp was placed beside his knee
 High and majestic was his look,
 At which the feliciest fiends had shook,
 And all unruffled was his face —
 They trusted his soul had gotten grace

- 20 Often had William of Deloraine
 Rode through the battle's bloody plain,
 And trampled down the warriors slain,
 And neither known remorse nor awe,
 Yet now remorse and awe he owned,
 His breath came thick, his head swam round,
 When this strange scene of death he saw
 Bewildered and unnerved he stood,
 And the priest prayed fervently and loud:
 With eyes averted prayed he,

- He might not endure the sight to see
Of the man he had loved so brotherly.
- 21 And when the priest his death prayer had pray'd
Thus unto Deloraine he said —
"Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
Or, Warrior, we may dearly rue,
For those, thou mayst not look upon
Are gathering fast round the yawning stone."
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the Mystic Book,
With iron clasped, and with iron bound —
He thought, as he took it, the dead man stood,
But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the Warrior's sight.
- 22 When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
The night returned in double gloom;
For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few,
And, as the Knight and Priest withdrew,
With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
They hardly might the postern gain
'Tis said, as through the aisles they passed,
They heard strange noises on the blast,
And through the cloister galleries small,
Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall,
I loud sobs, and laughter louder ran,
And voices unlike the voice of man,
As if the fiends kept holiday,
Because these spells were brought to day
I cannot tell how the truth may be,
I say the tale as 'twas said to me
- 23 "Now, hie thee hence," the Father said,
"And, when we are on death-bed laid,
O may our dear Lady, and sweet St John,
Forgive our souls for the deed we have done!" —
The Monk returned him to his cell,
And many a prayer and penance sped,
When the convent met at the noontide bell —
The Monk of St Mary's aisle was dead!
Before the cross was the body laid,
With hands clasped fast, as if still he prayed
- 24 The Knight breathed free in the morning wind
And strove his hardihood to find
He was glad when he passed the tombstones gray
Which girdle round the fair Abbaye,
For the Mystic Book, to his bosom pressed
Felt like a load upon his breast,
And his joints, with nerves of iron twined,
Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind —
Full fain was he when the dawn of day
Began to brighten Cheviot gray,

- He joyed to see the cheerful light,
And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might
- 25 The sun had brightened Cheviot gray,
The sun had brightened the Carter's side;
And soon beneath the rising day
Smiled Branksome towers and Teviot's tide
The wild birds told their warbling tale,
And wakened every flower that blows;
And peeped forth the violet pale,
And spread her breast the mountain-rose
And lovelier than the rose so red,
Yet paler than the violet pale,
She early left her sleepless bed,
The fairest maid of Teviotdale
- 26 Why does fair Margaret so early awake,
And don her kittle so hastily,
And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,
Why tremble her slender fingers to tie?
Why does she stop, and look often around,
As she glides down the secret stair?
And why does she put the shaggy blood-hound,
As he rouses him up from his lair,
And, though she passes the postern alone,
Why is not the watchman's bugle blown?
- 27 The Ladye steps in doubt and dread,
Lest her watchful mother hear her tread,
The Ladye caresses the rough blood-hound,
Lest his voice should waken the castle round,
The watchman's bugle is not blown,
For he was her foster-father's son;
And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of light,
To meet Baron Henry, her own true knight
- 28 The Knight and Ladye fair are met,
And under the hawthorn's boughs are set
A fairer pair were never seen
To meet beneath the hawthorn green
He was stately, and young, and tall,
Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall
And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,
Lent to her cheek a livelier red,
When the half-sigh her swelling breast
Against the silken riband pressed,
When her blue eyes their secret told,
Though shaded by her locks of gold—
Where would you find the peerless fair,
With Margaret of Branksome might compare!
- 29 And now, fair dames, methinks I see
You listen to my minstrelsy;
Your waving locks ye backward throw,
And sidelong bend your necks of snow —

LIV OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

- Ye ween to hear a melting tale,
 Of two true lovers in a dale,
 And how the knight, with ten for five,
 To print his faithful passion strove,
 Swore he might at her feet expire,
 But never, never cease to love;
 And how she blushed, and how she sighed,
 And, half consenting, half denied,
 And said that she would die a maid —
 Yet, might the bloody feud be staid,
 Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,
 Marguet of Brinksome's choice should be
- 30 Alas! fair dames, your hopes are vain!
 My harp has lost the enchanting strain,
 Its lightness would my age reprove
 My hairs are gray, my limbs are cold,
 My heart is dead, my veins are cold —
 I may not, must not, sing of love
- 31 Beneath an oak, mossed o'er by eld,
 The Baron's Dwarf his courser held,
 And held his crested helm and spear
 That Dwarf was scarcely an earthly man,
 If the tales were true that of him ran
 Though all the Border, far and near
 'Twas said, when the Baron a-hunting rode
 Through Reedsdale's glens, but rarely trod,
 He heard a voice cry, "Lost! lost! lost!"
 And, like tennis ball by racket tossed,
 A leap, of thirty feet and three,
 Made from the gorse this elfin shape,
 Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
 And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's knee
 Lord Cranstoun was some what dismayed,
 'Tis said that five good miles he rode,
 To rid him of his company,
 But where he rode one mile, the Dwarf ran fear,
 And the Dwarf was first at the castle door
- 32 Use lessens marvel, it is said
 This elvish Dwarf with the Baron staid,
 Little he ate, and less he spoke,
 Not mingled with the menial flock,
 And oft apart his arms he tossed,
 And often muttered, "Lost! lost! lost!"
 He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,
 But well Lord Cranstoun served he
 And he of his service was full fain,
 For once he had been tr'en or slain,
 An' it had not been his ministry
 All between Home and Hermitage,
 Tall ed of I old Cranstoun's Goblin Page

33 For the Baron went on pilgrimage,
 And took with him this elvish Page
 To Mary's chapel of the Lowes
 For there, beside our Lady's lake,
 An offering he had sworn to make,
 And he would pray his vows
 But the Ladye of Branksome gathered a band
 Of the best that would ride at her command,
 The trysting place was Newark Lee
 Wat of Harden came thither amain,
 And thither came John of Thulestane,
 And thither came William of Deloisme,
 They were three hundred spears and three
 Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,
 Their horses pruned, their lances gleam
 They came to St Mary's lake ere dry,
 But the chapel was void, and the Baron away
 They burned the chapel for very rage,
 And cursed Lord Cianstoun's Goblin Page.

34 And now, in Branksome's good green-wood,
 As under the aged oak he stood,
 The Baron's couiser pricks his ears,
 As if a distant noise he hears
 The Dwarf waves his long lein arm on high,
 And signs to the lovers to part and fly,
 No time was then to vow or sigh
 Fair Marguēt, through the hazel grove,
 Flew like the startled cushat-dove
 The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein,
 Vaulted the Knight on his steed amain,
 And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
 Rode eastward through the hawthorns green

WHILL thus he poured the lengthened tale,
 The Minstrel's voice began to fail
 Full shyly smiled the observant page,
 And gave the withered hand of age
 A goblet, crowned with mighty wine,
 The blood of Velez' scorched vine
 He raised the silver cup on high
 And while the big drop filled his eye,
 Prayed God to bless the Duchess long,
 And all who cheered a son of song
 The attending maidens smiled to see,
 How long, how deep, how zealously,
 The precious juice the Minstrel quaffed,
 And he, emboldened by the draught,
 Looked gaily back to them, and laughed
 The cordial nectar of the bowl
 Swelled his old veins and cheered his soul,
 A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
 Ere thus his tale again began

CANTO THIRD

- 1 And said I that my limbs were old,
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindle fire was fled,
And my poor withered heart was dead,
And that I might not sing of love—
How could I to the dearest theme
That ever warmed a minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false, a recreant prove?
How could I name love's very name,
Nor wake my harp to notes of flame?
- 2 In peace, Love tunes the stately reel,
In war, he mounts the warrior's steel,
In halls, in gay attire is seen,
In hamlets, dances on the green
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above,
For love is heaven and heaven is love
- 3 So thought Lord Crystown, as I veen,
While, pondering deep the tender scene,
He rode through Branksome's bay thorn-
But the Page shouted wild and shrill—
And scarce his helmet could he don,
When downward from the sky he fell
A stately knight came pricking on
That warrior steed, so dapple-gray,
Was dark with sweat, and splashed with clay;
His armour red with man, a stain
He seemed in such a weary plight,
As if he had ridden the long night,
For it was William of Deloraine.
- 4 But no whit weary did he seem,
When, dancing in the sunny leam,
He marked the crime on the Baron's crest,
For his ready spear was in his rest
Few were the words and stern and high,
That marked the foeman's feudal hate,
For question fierce, and proud reply,
Gave signal soon of dire debate
Their very coursers seemed to know
That each was other's mortal foe,
And snorted fire when wheeled round,
To give each knight his vantage ground
- 5 In rapid round the Baron bent,
He sighed a sigh, and prayed a prayer.
The prayer was to his patron saint,
The sigh was to his love fair
Stout Deloraine nor sighed, nor prayed,
Nor saint, nor lady, called to aid,

But he stooped his head, and couched his spear,
And spurred his steed to full career
The meeting of these champions proud
Seemed like the busting thunder-cloud

- 5 Stern was the dint the Borderer lent !
The stately Baron backwards bent,
Bent backwards to his horse's tail,
And his plumes went scattering on the gale,
The tough ash spear, so stout and true,
Into a thousand splinters flew
But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,
Pierced through, like silk, the Borderer's mail,
Through shield, and jack, and acon, passed, &
Deep in his bosom broke at last—
Still sate the warrior saddle-fast,
Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,
Down went the steed, the girthing broke, &
Hurled on a heap lay man and horse
The Baron onward passed his course, &
Nor knew—so giddy rolled his brain—
His foe lay stretched upon the plain

- 7 But when he reined his courser round,
And saw his foeman on the ground
Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
He bade his page to stanch the wound,
And there beside the warrior stay,
And tend him in his doubtful state,
And lead him to Branksome castle gate
His noble mind was only moved
For the kinsman of the maid he loved
“This shalt thou do without delay,
No longer here myself may stay
Unless the swifter I speed away,
Short shrift will be at my dying day”—

- 8 Away in speed Lord Cranstoun rode,
The Goblin Page behind rode
His lord's command he ne'er withstood,
Though small his pleasure to do good
As the corslet off he took,
The Dwarf espied the Mighty Book !
Much he marvelled, a knight of pride
Like a book-bosomed priest should ride
He thought not to search or stanch the wound,
Until the secret he had found

- 9 The iron band, the iron clasp,
Resisted long the elfin grasp,
For when the first he had undone,
It closed as he the next begun
Those iron clasps, that iron band,
Would not yield to unchristened hand,

Till he smere'd the cover o'er
 With the Borderer's curdled gore,
 A moment then the volume spread,
 And one short spell therein he read
 It had much of glamour might,
 Could make a hdye seem a knight,
 The cobwebs on a dungeon wall
 Seem tapestry in lordly hall,
 A nut-shell seem a gilded barge,
 A sheeling seem a palace large,
 And youth seem age, and age seem youth—
 All was delusion, nought was truth

10 He had not read another spell,
 When on his cheek a buffet fell,
 So fierce, it stretched him on the plain,
 Beside the wounded Deloraine
 From the ground he rose dismayed,
 And shook his huge and matted head,
 One word he muttered, and no more—
 "Man of age, thou smitest sore!"
 No more the Elfin Page durst try
 Into the wondrous Book to pry,
 The clasps, though smere'd with Christian gore,
 Shut faster than they were before
 He hid it underneath his cloak—
 Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
 I cannot tell, so mot I thrive,
 It was not given by man alive

11 Unwillingly himself he addressed,
 To do his master's high behest
 He lifted up the living corse,
 And laid it on the weary horse,
 He led him into Branksome hall,
 Before the beards of the warders all,
 And each did after swear and say,
 There only passed a wain of hay
 He took him to Lord David's tower,
 Even to the Lady's secret bower,
 And, but that stronger spells were spread,
 And the door might not be opened,
 He had laid him on her very bed
 Whate'er he did of grimace,
 Was always done maliciously,
 He flung the warrior on the ground,
 And the blood welled freshly from the wound

12 As he repass'd the outer court,
 He spied the fair young child at sport
 He thought to train him to the wood,
 For, at a word, be it understood,
 He was always for ill, and never for good

Seemed to the boy, some comrade gay
Led him forth to the woods to play,
On the drawbridge the waiders stout
Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out

- 13 He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
Until they came to a woodland brook,
The running stream dissolved the spell,
And his own elvish shape he took
Could he have had his pleasure yelde,
He had crippled the joints of the noble child,
Or, with his fingers long and leam,
Had strangled him in fiendish spleen,
But his awful mother he had in dread,
And also his power was limited,
So he but scowled on the startled child,
And darted through the forest wild,
The woodland brook he bounding crossed,
And laughed, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"

- 14 Full sore amazed at the wondrous change,
And frightened, as a child might be,
At the wild yell and visage strange,
And the dark words of grammarie,
The child, amidst the forest bower,
Stood rooted like a lily flower,
And when at length, with trembling pace,
He sought to find where Branksome lay,
He feared to see that grisly face
Ghore from some thicket on his way
Thus, starting oft, he journeyed on,
And deeper in the wood is gone,—
For yce the more he sought his way,
The farther still he went astray,—
Until he heard the mountains round
Ring to the baying of a hound

- 15 And hark! and hark! the deep-mouthed bark
Comes nigher still, and nigher,
Bursts on the path a dark blood-hound,
His tawny muzzle tracked the ground,
And his red eye shot fire
Soon as the wildered child saw he,
He flew at him right furiouslie
I woen you would have seen with joy
The bearing of the gallant boy,
When, worthy of his noble sire,
His wet cheek glowed 'twixt fear and ire,
He faced the blood-hound manfully,
And held his little bat on high,
So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
At cautious distance howsely bayed,
But still in act to spring.

- When dashed in archer through the glade,
 And when he saw the hound was stay'd,
 He drew his tough bow-string,
 But a rough voice cried, "Shoot not, hoy!
 Ho! shoot not, Edward—'tis a boy!"
- 16 The speaker issued from the wood,
 And checked his fellow's surly mood,
 And quelled the ban dog's ire
 He was an English yeoman good,
 And born in Lancashire
 Well could he hit a fallow deer
 Five hundred feet him fro',
 With hand more true, and eye more clear,
 No archer bended bow
 His coal-black hair, shorn round and close
 Set off his sun-burn'd face,
 Old England's sign, St George's cross,
 His barret cap did grace,
 His bugle-horn hung by his side,
 All in a wolf-skin baldric tied,
 And his short falchion, sharp and clear,
 Had pierced the throat of many a deer
- 17 His kirtle, made of forest green,
 Reached scantily to his knee,
 And, at his belt, of arrows keen
 A furbished sheaf bore he,
 His buckler scarce in breadth a span
 No longer fence had he,
 He never counted him a man
 Would strike below the knee,
 His slackened bow was in his hand,
 And the leash, that was his bloodhound's band
- 18 He would not do the fair child harm,
 But held him with his powerful arm,
 That he might neither fight nor flee,
 For when the Red-Cross spied he,
 The boy strove long and violently
 "Now, by St George," the archer cries,
 "Edward, methinks we have a prize!
 This boy's fair face, and courage free,
 Show he is come of high degree"—
- 19 "Yes, I am come of high degree,
 For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch,
 And, if thou dost not set me free,
 False Southron, thou shalt dearly rue
 For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
 And William of Delorune, good at need,
 And every Scott from Eske to Tweed,
 And, if thou dost not let me go,
 Despite thy arrows, and thy bow,
 I'll have thee hanged to feed the crow!"

- 20 "Gramercy, for thy good will, fair boy !
My mind was never set so high,
But if thou art chief of such a clan,
And art the son of such a man,
And ever comest to thy command,
Our wardens had need to keep good order
My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
Thou'lt make them work upon the Border
Meantime, be pleased to come with me,
For good Lord Dacie shalt thou see,
I think our work is well begun,
When we have taken thy father's son"—
- 21 Although the child was led away
In Branksome still he seemed to stay,
For so the Dwarf his part did play,
And, in the shape of that young boy,
He wrought the castle much annoy
The comrades of the young Buccleuch
He pinched, and beat, and overthrew,
Nay, some of them he well nigh slew
He tore Dame Maudlin's silken tire,
And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,
He lighted the match of his brandelier,
And woefully scorched the hackbutteer
It may be hardly thought, or said,
The mischief that the witchin made,
Till many of the castle guessed
That the young Baron was possessed'
- 22 Well I ween, the charm he held
The noble Ladye had soon dispelled,
But she was deeply busied then
To tend the wounded Deloraine
Much she wondered to find him lie,
On the stone threshold stretched along,
She thought some spirit of the sky
Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong,
Because, despite her precept dreid,
Perchance he in the Book had read,
But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
And it was earthly steel and wood
- 23 She drew the splinter from the wound,
And with a charm she stanch'd the blood,
She bide the gash be cleansed and bound
No longer by his couch she stood,
But she has ta'en the broken lance,
And washed it from the clotted gore,
And salv'd the splinter o'er and o'er
William of Deloraine, in trance,
Whene'er she turned it round and round,
Twisted, as if she galled his wound
Then to her maidens she did say,

That he should be whole man and sound,
 Within the course of a night and day
 Full long she toiled, for she did rue
 Mishap to friend so stout and true

- 24 So passed the day—the evening fell,
 'Twas near the time of curfew bell,
 The air was mild, the wind was calm,
 The stream was smooth, the dew was balm.
 E'en the rude watchman, on the tower
 Enjoyed and blessed the lovely hour.
 Far more far Margaret loved and blessed
 The hour of silence and of rest

On the high turret sitting lone,
 She waked at times the lute's soft tone,
 Touched a wild note, and all between
 Thought of the bower of hawthorns green
 Her golden hair streamed free from band,
 Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
 Her blue eyes sought the west star,
 For lovers love the western star

- 25 Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
 That rises slowly to her ken,
 And, spreading broad its wavering light
 Shakes its loose tresses on the night?
 Is yon red glare the western star?
 O, 'tis the beacon-blaze of war!
 Scarce could she draw her tightened breath,
 For well she knew the fire of death!

- 26 The Warler viewed it blazing strong,
 And blew his war-note loud and long,
 Till, at the high and hughty sound,
 Rock, wood, and river rung around
 The blast alarmed the festal hall,
 And startled forth the warriors all,
 Far downward, in the castle yard,
 Full many a torch and cresset glared,
 And helms and plumes, confusedly tossed,
 Were in the blaze half seen, half lost,
 And spears in wild disorder shook,
 Like reeds beside a frozen brook

- 27 The Seneschal, whose silver hair
 Was reddened by the torches' glare
 Stood, in the midst, with gesture proud,
 And issued forth his mandates loud —
 "On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
 And three are kindling on Priesthughswire,
 Ride out, ride out,
 The foe to scout!
 Mount, mount for Brink ome, every man!
 Thou, Iodrig, warn the Johnstone clan,

That ever are true and stout —
 Ye need not send to Liddesdale,
 For, when they see the blazing bale,
 Elliots and Armstrongs never fail —
 Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life,
 And warn the warden of the strife
 Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze,
 Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise'

- 28 Fair Margaret, from the turret head,
 Heard, far below, the coursers' tread, *L*
 While loud the harness rung,
 As to their seats, with clamour dread,
 The ready horsemen sprung,
 And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,
 And leaders' voices, mingled notes,
 And out! and out!
 In hasty rout *mar!*
 The horsemen galloped forth,
 Dispersing to the south to scout,
 And east, and west, and north,
 To view their coming enemies,
 And warn their vassals and allies
- 29 The ready page, with hurried hand,
 Awaked the need-fire's slumbering brand,
 And ruddy blushed the heaven
 For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,
 Waved like a blood-flag on the sky,
 All flaming and uneven
 And soon a score of fires, I ween,
 From height, and hill, and cliff, were seen,
 Each with warlike tidings fraught,
 Each from each the signal caught,
 Each after each they glanced to sight,
 As stars arise upon the night
 They gleamed on many a dusky tarn, *f*
 Haunted by the lonely ern,
 On many a cairn's gray pyramid,
 Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid,
 Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,
 From Soltra and Dumpender Law,
 And Lothian heard the Regent's order,
 That all should bowne them for the Border.
- 30 The livelong night in Branksome rang
 The ceaseless sound of steel,
 The castle-bell, with backward clang
 Sent forth the hurum perl, *W. r.*
 Was frequent heard the heavy jar
 Where massy stone and iron bar
 Were piled on echoing keep and tower,
 To whelm the foe with deadly shower,

- Was frequent heard the changing guard,
 And watch word from the sleepless ward,
 While, worried by the endless din,
 Blood-hound and bun-dog yelled with him
- 31 The noble Dame, amid the broil,
 Shared the gray Senechal's high toil,
 And spoke of danger with a smile,
 Cheered the young knights, and counsel sage
 Held with the chiefs of riper age
 No tidings of the foe were brought,
 Nor of his numbers knew they aught,
 Nor what in time of truce he sought
 Some said, that there were thousands ten,
 And others weened that it was nought
 But Leven clans, or Tynedale men,
 Who came to gather in black mail,
 And Liddesdale, with small mail,
 Might drive them lightly back again
 So passed the anxious night away,
 And welcome was the peep of day

CEAS'D the high sound—the listening throng
 Applaud the Master of the Song,
 And marvel much, in helpless age,
 So hard should be his pilgrimage
 Had he no friend—no daughter dear,
 His wandering toil to shrieve and cheer,
 No son, to be his father's stay,
 And guide him on the rugged way?—
 "Ay! once he had—but he was dead!"
 Upon the harp he stooped his head,
 And busied himself the strings withal,
 To hide the tear, that fain would fall
 In solemn measure, soft and slow,
 Arose a father's notes of woe

CANTO FOURTH

- 1 SWEET Teviot! on thy silver tide
 The glaring bale-fires blaze no more;
 No longer steel clad warriors ride
 Along thy wild and willowed shore,
 Where'er thou wind'st by dale or hill,
 All, all is peaceful, all is still,
 As if thy waves, since Time was born,
 Since first they rolled upon the Tweed,
 Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
 Nor started at the bugle horn
- 2 Unlike the tide of human time,
 Which, though it change in ceaseless flow
 Retains each grief, retains each crime,
 Its earliest course was doomed to know,

- And, darker as it downward bears,
Is stained with past and present terrors
Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,
It still reflects to memory's eye
The hour, my brave, my only boy
Fell by the side of great Dundee
Why, when the volleying musket played
Against the bloody Highland blade
Why was not I beside him laid—
Enough—he died the death of fame,
Enough—he died with conquering Græme.
- 3 Now over Border dale and fell,
Full wide and far was terror spread,
For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed
The frightened flocks and herds were pent
Beneath the peel's rude battlement,
And maids and matrons dropped the tear,
While ready warriors seized the spear
From Branksome's towers, the watchman's eye,
Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy,
Which, curling in the rising sun,
Showed southern ravage was begun.
- 1 Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried—
“Prepare ye all for blows and blood!”
Watt Tinnin, from the Liddel-side,
Comes wading through the flood
Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
At his lone gate, and prove the lock,
It was but last St Barnabright
They sieged him a whole summer night,
But fled at morning, well they knew,
In vain he never tyanged the yew
Right sharp has been the evening shower
That drove him from his Liddel tower,
And, by my faith,” the gate-ward said,
“I think ’twill prove a Warden-Raid.”
- While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
Entered the echoing barbacan.
He led a small and shaggy dog,
That through a bog, from hag to hag,
Could bound like any Bilhope stag
It bore his wife and children in vain;
A half-clothed serf, as all their train.
His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-browed,
Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,
Laughed to her friends among the crowd.
He was of stature passing tall
But sparely formed, and lean withal:
A battered morion on his brow;
A leathern jock, as fence cross.

On his broad shoulders loo'd he long,
 A border-axe behind was slung,
 His spear, six Scottish ell's in length,
 Seem'd newly dyed with gore,
 His shafts and bow, of wondrous strength,
 His brady partner bore

- 6 Thus to the Ladye did Tynlum haw,
 The tidings of the English foe —
 "Belted Will Howard is marching here
 And hot I ord Diere, with men, a' a' w.
 And all the German hagbut men,
 Who have long lain at Aslerten
 They crossed the Liddel at cause hour,
 And burned my little Lonely tower,
 The fiend receive their souls therefor
 It had not been burned this year or I more
 Barn-yard and dwelling, blazing bright,
 Served to guide me on my flight.
 But I was chased the live long night
 Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Crane,
 Last upon my traces came,
 Until I turned at Priest through Scroggs,
 And shot their horses in the bog,
 Slew Fergus with my lance outright—
 I had him long at high despite,
 He drove my cows last East er n i g h t "
- 7 Now weary scouts from Liddesdale,
 Fast hurrying in, confirmed the tale,
 As far as they could judge by ken,
 Three hours would bring to Feviot's strand
 Three thousand armed Englishmen —
 Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,
 From Feviot, Aill, and Littrick shade,
 Came in, their Chief's defence to aid
 There was saddling and mounting in haste,
 There was pricking o'er moor and lee,
 He, that was last at the trysting place,
 Was but lightly held of his grey lady.
- 8 From fair St Mary's silver wave,
 From deery Gamescleuch's dusky height,
 His ready lances Thurlestane brave
 Arrayed beneath a banner bright
 The treasured fleur-de-luce he clings,
 To wie the his shield, since royal James,
 Encamped by Falk's mossy wave,
 The proud distinction grateful gave,
 For faith 'mid feudal jars,
 What time, save Thurlestane alone,
 Of Scotland's stubborn braves none
 Would march to southern wars,

And hence, in fair remembrance worn,
 Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne;
 Hence his high motto shines revealed —
 “Ready, ye ready” for the field

9 An aged knight, to danger steel'd,
 With many a most trooper came on
 And azure in a golden field,
 The stars and crescent graced his shield,
 Without the band of Murdieston
 Wide lay his lands round Orkwood tower
 And wide round haunted Castle-Ower,
 High over Borthwick’s mount in flood
 His wood-embosomed mansion stood,
 In the dark glen so deep below
 The herds of plundered England low —
 His bold retainers daily food,
 And bought with danger blows and blood
 Marauding chief’s sole delight
 The moonlight raid the morning fight,
 Not even the Flower of Yarrow’s charm,
 In youth, might tame his rage for arm,
 And still, in age, he spurned at rest,
 And still his brows the helmet press’d
 Albeit the blanch’d locks below
 Were white as Dmity’s spotless snow
 Five stately warriors drew the sword
 Before their father’s band,
 A braver knight than Harden’s lord
 Ne’er belted on a brand

10 Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,
 Came trooping down the Todshaw hill,
 By the sword they won their land,
 And by the sword they hold it still
 Harken Ladie to the tale,
 How thy sires won fair Eskdale. —
 Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,
 The Beattisons were his vassals there
 The Earl was gentle, and mild of mood,
 The vassals were warlike, and fierce and rude,
 High of heart, and haughty of word
 Little they recked of a time liege-lord
 The Earl to fair Eskdale came
 Homage and seignory to claim
 Of Gilbert the Giliard a heriot he sought,
 Saying, “Give thy best steed, as a vassal ought”
 “Deu to me is my bonny white steed
 Oft has he helped me at pinch of need,
 Lord and Earl though thou be I trow,
 I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou” —
 Word on word gave fuel to fire
 Till so highly blazed the Beattison’s ire,

But that the Earl the flight had to en,
 The vassals there their lord had slain
 Sore he plied both whip and spur,
 As he urged his steed through the dark night,
 And it fell down a heavy weight,
 Just on the threshold of Branksome gate

- 11 The Earl was a wrathful man to see,
 Full fain avenged would he be
 In haste to Branksome's Lord he sped,
 Saying, "Take these traitors to thy bed,
 For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold,
 All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold
 Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattison's clan,
 If thou leavest on Esk a landed man!
 But spare Woodkerrick's lands alone,
 For he lent me his horse to escape upon —
 A glad man then was Branksome hold,
 Down he flung him the purse of gold,
 To Eskdale soon he spurred again,
 And with him five hundred riders had taken
 He left his merry men in the mist of the hill,
 And bade them hold them close and still
 And alone he wended to the plain,
 To meet with the Galliard and all his train
 To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said —
 "Know thou me for thy liege-lord and head,
 Deal not with me as with Morton tame,
 For Scotts play best at the roughest game
 Give me in peace my heriot due
 Thy bonny white steel, or thou shalt rue
 If my horn I three times wind,
 Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind —"

- 12 Loudly the Beattison laughed in scorn, —
 "Little care we for thy winded horn
 Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot
 To yield his steed to a haughty Scott
 Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,
 With rusty spur and rusty boot" —
 He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse,
 That the dun deer started at fair Craikcross,
 He blew again so loud and clear,
 Through the gray mountain-mist there did lances appear
 And the third blast rang with such a din,
 That the echoes answered from Pentoun Inn,
 And all his riders came lightly in —
 Then had you seen a gallant shock,
 When saddles were emptied, and lances broke!
 For each scornful word the Galliard had said,
 A Beattison on the field was laid
 His own good sword the chieftain drew,
 And he bore the Galliard through and through,

Where the Beattisons' blood mixed with the mil,
 The Galliard's Haugh men call it still
 The Scotts have scattered the Beattison clan,
 In Eskdale they left but one landed man
 The valley of Eske, from the mouth to the source,
 Was lost and won for that bonny white horse

- 13 Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
 And warriors more than I may name,
 From Yarrow-cleuch to Hindhaugh-swar
 From Woodhousele to Chester-glen,
 Trooped man and horse, and bow and spear,
 Then gathering word was "Bellenden"
 And better hearts o'er Border sod
 To siege or rescue never rode
 The Ladye marked the aids come in,
 And high her heart of pride arose,
 She bade her youthful son attend,
 That he might know his father's friend,
 And learn to face his foes
 "The boy is ripe to look on war,
 I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
 And his true arrow struck afar
 The raven's nest upon the cliff,
 The Red Cross, on a southern breast,
 Is broader than the raven's nest,
 Thou, Whitslade, shalt teach him his weapon to wield,
 And o'er him hold his father's shield"—
- 14 Well may you think, the wily Page
 Cared not to face the Ladye sage
 He counterfeited childish fear,
 And shrank, and shed full many a tear,
 And mourned and plained in manner wild
 The attendants to the Ladye told,
 Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
 That wont to be so free and bold
 Then wrathful was the noble dame,
 She blushed blood red for very shame—
 "Hence! ere the clan his faintness view,
 Hence with the weakling to Buccleuch!—
 Watt Tynlunn, thou shalt be his guide
 To Rangleburn's lonely side—
 Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,
 That coward should e'er be son of mine!"
- 15 A heavy task Watt Tynlunn had,
 To guide the counterfeited lad
 Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
 Of that ill omened elvish freight,
 He bolted, sprung, and reared amain,
 Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein
 It cost Watt Tynlunn muckle toil
 To drive him but a Scottish mile

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

But, as a shallow brook they crossed,
 The elf, amid the running stream,
 His figure changed, his form in dream,
 And fled, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"
 Full fast the urchin ran and laughed,
 But faster still a cloth-yard shaft
 Whistled from startled Tاملunn's eye,
 And pierced his shoulder through and through
 Although the imp might not be slain,
 And though the wound soon healed again,
 Yet, as he ran, he yelled for pain,
 And Watt of Tاملunn, much aghast,
 Rode back to Brail some fiery fast

- 16 Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
 That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood
 And martial murmurs, from below,
 Proclaimed the approaching soldiers foe
 Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
 Were Border pipes and bugles blown,
 The courser's neighing he could ken,
 And measured tread of marching men;
 While broke at times the solemn hum,
 The Almāyn's sullen kettle drum
 And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
 Above the copse appear,
 And glistening through the haw thorn-green,
 Shine helm, and shield, and spear

- 17 Light forayers first, to view the ground,
 Spurred their fleet courser loosely round,
 Behind, in close array, and fast,
 The Kendal archers, all in green,
 Obedient to the bugle blast,
 Advancing from the wood are seen
 To back and guard the archer band,
 Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand,
 A hardy race, on Irish bred,
 With kirtles white, and crosses red,
 Arrayed beneath the banner tall
 That streamed o'er Acre's conquered wall,
 And minstrels, as they marched in order,
 Played, "Noble Lord Dacre, he dwells on the Border"

- 18 Behind the English bill and bow,
 The mercenaries, firm and slow,
 Moved on to fight, in dark array,
 By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,
 Who brought the band from distant Rhine,
 And sold their blood for foreign pay
 The camp their home, their law the sword,
 They knew no country, owned no lord
 They were not armed like England's sons,
 But bore the levin-darting guns

- Buff-coats, all frounced and brodered o'er,
 And morsing-horns and scarfs they wore,
 Lach better knee was bared, to aid
 The warriors in the escalade,
 All, as they marched, in rugged tongue
 Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung
- 19 But louder still the clamour grew,
 And louder still the minstrels blew,
 When, from beneath the greenwood tree,
 Rode forth Lord Howard's chivalry,
 His men-at-arms, with glance and spear, /
 Brought up the battle's glittering rear
 There many a youthful knight, full keen
 To gain his spurs, in arms was seen,
 With favour in his crest, or glove,
 Memorial of his lady-love
 So rode they forth in fair array,
 Till full their lengthened lines display,
 Then called a halt, and made a stand
 And cried, "St George, for merry England!" —
- 20 Now every English eye, intent,
 On Branksome's armed towers was bent
 So new they were, that they might know
 The straining harsh of each cross-bow,
 On battlement and battizan
 Gleamed axe, and spear, and partizan,
 Falcon, and culver, on each tower,
 Stood prompt then deadly hail to shower
 And flashing armour frequent broke
 From eddying whirls of sable smoke,
 Where, upon tower and turret head,
 The seething pitch and molten lead
 Reeked, like a witch's caldron red
 While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,
 The wicket opes, and from the wall
 Rides forth the horry Seneschal
- Armed he rode, all save the head,
 His white beard o'er his breast-plate spread
 Unbroke by age, erect his seat,
 He ruled his eager courser's gut,
 Forced him, with chastened fire to pounce,
 And, high curvetting, slow advance
 In sign of truce, his better hand
 Displayed a peeled willow wand,
 His squire, attending in the rear,
 Bore high a gauntlet on a spear
 When they espied him riding out,
 Lord Howard and Lord Dacre stout
 Sped to the front of their array,
 To hear what this old knight should say

- 22 ' Ye English warden lords, of you
Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,
Why, 'gunst the truce of Border time,
In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
And all yon mercenary band,
Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
My Ladye reads you swith return,
And, if but one poor straw you burn,
Or do our towers so much mole t
As scare one swallow from her nest,—
St Mury! but we'll light a brand.
Shall warm your hearts in Cumberland! —
- 23 A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
But calmer Howard took the word —
"My't please thy Dame, Sir Senechal
To seek the castle's outward wall,
Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show,
Both why we came, and when we go"
The message sped, the noble Dame
To the walls' outward circle came,
Each chief around leamed on his spear,
To see the pursuivant appear
All in Lord Howard's livery dressed,
The lion argent decked his breast,
He led a boy of blooming hue—
O sight to meet a mother's view!
It was the heir of great Buccleuch
Obeisance meet the herald made,
And thus his master's will he said —
- 24 "It irks, high Dame, my noble Lords,
'Gunst ladye fair to draw their swords,
But yet they may not tamely see,
All through the western wardenry,
Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,
And burn and spoil the Border side,
And ill beseems your rank and birth
To make your towers a flemens firth
We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
That he may suffer much-treason pain
It was but list St Cuthbert's even
He pricked to Stapleton on Leven
Harried the lands of Richard Musgrave,
And slew his brother by dint of glaive
Then, since a lone and widowed Dame
These restless riders may not tame,
Either receive within thy towers
Two hundred of my master's powers,
Or straight they sound their warison,
And storm and spoil thy garrison; —
And this fair boy, to London led,
Shall good King Edward's page be bred "

25 He ceased—and loud the boy did cry,
 And stretched his little arms on high,
 Implored for aid each well-known face,
 And strove to seek the Dame's embrace
 A moment changed that Lady's cheer, *(i)*
 Gushed to her eye the unbidden tear,
 She gazed upon the leaders round,
 And dark and sad each warrior frown'd,
 Then, deep within her-sobbing breast
 She locked the struggling sigh to rest,
 Unaltered and collected stood, *(c)*
 And thus replied in dauntless mood —

26 "Say to your Lords of high emproue *(c)*
 Who war on woman and on boys,
 That either William of Deloiaime
 Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain,
 Or else he will the combat take
 'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake
 No knight in Cumberland so good,
 But William may count with him kin and blood
 Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,
 When English blood swelled Ancrum fould,
 And but that Lord Dacre's steed was wight,
 And bore him ably in the flight,
 Himself had seen him dubbed a knight
 For the young heir of Branksome's line,
 God be his aid, and God be mine!
 Through me no friend shall meet his doom,
 Here, while I live, no foe finds room
 Then, if thy Lords then purpose wge,
 Take our defiance loud, and high, *(i)*
 Our slogan is their lyke-wake dirge, *(i)*
 Our moat the grave where they shall lie'

27 Proud she looked round, applause to claim—
 Then lightened Thirlestane's eye of flame,
 His bugle Wat of Harden blew,
Pensils and pennons wide were flung,
 To heaven the Border slogan rung,
 "St Mary for the young Buccleuch!"—
 The English wu-cry answered wide,
 And forward bent each southern spear,
 Each Kendal archer made a stride,
 And drew the bowstring to his ear
 Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown,—
 But, ere a gray-goose shaft had flown,
 A horseman galloped from the rear

28 "Ah! noble Lords!" he, breathless, said,
 "What treason has your march betrayed?
 What make you here, from aid so far,
 Before you walls, round you war?
 Your foemen triumph in the thought,

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

In the old Douglas' dry
 He brooked not, he, that scoffing tongue
 Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,
 Or call his song untrue,
 For this, when they the goblet pled,
 And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,
 The bard of Reull he slew
 On Teviot's side, in fight, they stood,
 And tuneful hands were stained with blood,
 Where still the thorn's white branches wave,
 Memorial o'er his rival's grave

- 35 Why should I tell the rigid doom,
 That dragged my master to his tomb,
 How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,
 Wept till their eyes were dead and dim,
 And wrung their hands for love of him,
 Who died at Jedwood Air?
 He died!—his scholars, one by one,
 To the cold silent grave are gone,
 And I, alas! survive alone,
 To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
 And grieve that I shall hear no more
 The strains, with envy heard before,
 For, with my minstrel brethren fled,
 My jealousy of song is dead

He praised the listening dames again
 Applaud the hoary Minstrel's strain,
 With many a word of kindly cheer,—
 In pity half, and half sincere,—
 Marvelled the Duchess how so well
 His legendary song could tell
 Of ancient deeds, so long forgot,
 Of feuds, whose memory was not,
 Of forests, now laid waste and bare,
 Of towers, which harbour now the hue,
 Of manners, long since changed and gone;
 Of chiefs, who under their gray stone
 So long had slept, that fickle Fame
 Had blotted from her rolls their name,
 And turned round some new minion's head
 The fading wreath for which they bled,
 In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse
 Could call them from their marble hearse
 The Harper smiled, well pleased, for ne'er
 Was flattery lost on poet's ear
 A simple race! they waste their toil
 For the vain tribute of a smile,
 E'en when in age their flame expires,
 Her dulcet breath can fan its fires

Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,
And strives to trim the short-lived blaze

Smiled then well-pleased, the Aged Man,
And thus his tale continued in

CANTO THIRD

CITIZENRY — they do not err,
Who say, that when the Poet dies,
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies,
Who, in the cliff, and cavern long,
For the departed band make mourn,
That mountains weep in crystal rill,
That flowers in tears of balm distil,
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply,
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirge round his grave
Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn—
Those things inanimate can mourn,
But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
Is vocal with the plaintive wail
Of those, who, else forgotten long,
Lived in the poet's faithful song,
And, with the poet's parting breath,
Whose memory feels a second death
The maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
That love, true love, should be forgot,
From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
Upon the gentle minstrel's bier
The Phantom Knight, his glory fled,
Mourns o'er the fields he harped with dead,
Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
And shrieks along the battle-plain
The chief, whose antique crownlet long
Shall sparkled in the funeral song,
Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
Sees, in the thralldom once his own,
His ashes unlighted lie,
His place, his power, his memory die
His groans the lonely caverns fill,
His tears of rage impel the rill,
All mourn the minstrel's harp unstrung,
Their name unknown, their praise unsung

Scarcely the hot assault was staved,
The terms of truce were scarcely made,
When they could spy, from Brinksome's towers,
The advancing march of martial powers
Thick clouds of dust afar appeared,
And trampling steeds were faintly heard,

Bright spears, above the columns drest,
 Glanced momentary to the sun,
 And feudal banners fur displayed
 The bands that moved to Branksome Hall.

- 4 Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
 "I from the fur Middle March came,
 'The Bloody Heart' blare I in the war,
 Announcing Douglas' dreaded name;
 Vails not to tell what steady and firm
 Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburn
 Their men in battle order set,
 And Swinto laid the lance in rest,
 That timed of yore the sparkling crest
 Of Clarence's Plantagenet,
 Nor list I say what hundreds more,
 From the rich Merse and Lammermoor
 And Tweed's fur borders, to the war,
 Beneath the crest of old Dunbar,
 And Hepburn's mingled banners come,
 Down the steep mountain glittering far,
 And shouting still, 'A Home! a Home!'"

- 5 Now squire and knight, from Branksome Hall,
 On many a courteous message went,
 To every chief and lord they paid
 Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid
 And told them,—how a truce was made,
 And how a day of fight was taken
 'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine,
 And how the Lady prayed them dear,
 "That all would stay the fight to see,
 And deign, in love and courtesy,
 To taste of Branksome cheer
 Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,
 Were England's noble Lords forgot,
 Himself, the hon'ry Seneschal,
 Rode forth, in seemly terms to call
 Those gallant foes to Branksome Hall
 Accepted Howard, than whom knight
 Was never dubbed, more bold in fight,
 Nor, when from war and armour free,
 More famed for stately courtesy
 But angry Dacre rather chose
 In his pavilion to repose

- 6 Now, noble Dame, perchance you ask
 How these two hostile armies met?
 Deeming it were no easy task
 To keep the truce which here was set,
 Where martial spirits, all on fire,
 Breathed only blood and mortal ire—
 By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
 By habit, and by nation foes,

They met on Teviot's strand
 They met, and so the them mingled down,
 Without a threat without a frown,
 As brother meet in foreign land
 The hands, the spears that lately grasped,
 Still in the mailed gauntlet clasped,
 Were interchanged in greeting down,
 Visions were raised, and faces shown,
 And many a friend, to friend made known,
 Partook of social cheer
 Some drove the jolly bowl about,
 With dice and draughts some chased the day,
 And some, with many a merry shout,
 In rout, revellry, and rout,
 Pursued the foot-ball play

7 Yet be it known, had bugles blown,
 Or sign of war been seen,
 Those bands, so far together ranged,
 Those hands, so firmly interchanged,
 Had dyed with gore the green
 The merry shout by Teviot side
 Had sunk in war cries wild and wide,
 And in the groan of death,
 And whinger, now in friendship true,
 The sword met to part and share,
 Had found a bloody sheath
 'Twixt truth and war, such sudden change
 Was not unfrequent, nor held strange,
 In the old Border-day,
 But yet on Branksome's towers and town,
 In peaceful merriment, sank down
 The sun's declining ray

8 The blithesome signs of wassel gay
 Decayed not with the dying day,
 Soon through the latticed window tall
 Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
 Divided square by shafts of stone,
 Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone,
 Nor less the gilded rafters rang
 With merry harp and lute's clang
 And frequent, on the darkening plain,
 Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
 As bands, their straggles to regain,
 Give the shrill watch-word of their clan;
 And revellers, o'er their bowls, proclaim
 Douglas' or Dacre's conquering name

9 Less frequent heard, and fainter still,
 At length the various clamours died,
 And you might hear, from Branksome hill,
 No sound but Teviot's rushing tide,

Save, when the clangour rent
 The challenge of his watch could tell,
 And save, where, through the dark portal,
 The clanging axe and hammer came
 Rung from the neather hall,
 For many a busy hand coded there,
 Strong piles to snare, and beams to square,
 The lists' dread barriers to prepare,
 Against the morrow's dawn

- 10 Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
 Despite the Dame's reproving tale,
 Nor marvel'd she, as she left her part,
 Full many a wistful sigh
 For many a noble warrior strove
 To win the Flower of Teviot's hall,
 And many a bold all. —
 With throbbing head and anxious heart,
 All in her lonely bower part,
 In broken sleep she lay
 Betimes, from silken couch she rose,
 While yet the bannered hosts repose
 She viewed the dawning day
 Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
 First woke the loveliest and the best

- 11 She gazed upon the inner court,
 Which in the tower's tall shadow lay,
 Where counsels' clang, and stamp, and tramp
 Had rung the livelong yesterday,
 Now still as death, till, stalking slow, —
 The jingling spurs announced his tread, —
 A stately warrior passed below,
 But when he raised his plumed head —
 Blessed Mary! can it be? —
 Secure, as if in Ouseburn bowers,
 He walks through Brintsome's hostile towers
 With fearless step and free
 She dare not sigh, she dare not speak —
 Oh! if one page's slumbers break,
 His blood the price must pay!
 Not all the pearls Queen Mary wears,
 Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,
 Shall buy his life and day

- 12 Yet was his hazard small—for well
 You may bethink you of the spell
 Of that sly urchin Page,
 Thus to his lord he did impart
 And made him seem, by glamour art
 A knight from Hermitage
 Unchallenged, thus, the warden's post,
 The court, unchallenged, thus he crossed,
 For all the vassalage

But, O! what magic's quaint disguise
Could blind fur Margaret's azule eyes!

She started from her scat,
While with surprise and fear she store,<
And both could scarcely master love—
Lord Henry's at her feet

- 13 Oft have I mused, what purpose bad
That foul malicious urchin had
To bring this meeting round,
For happy love's a heavenly sight,
And by a vile malignant spite
In such no joy is found
And oft I've deemed, perchance he thought
Their erring passion might have wrought
Sorrow, and sin, and shame,
And death to Cranstoun's gallant Knight
And to the gentle Ladye bight,
Disgrace, and loss of fame
But earthly spirit could not tell
The heart of them that loved so well
True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven
It is not Fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind—
Now leave we Margaret and her Knight,
To tell you of the approaching fight

- 14 Their warring blast the bugles blew,
The pipe's shrill port aroused each clan,
In haste, the deadly strife to view,
The trooping warriors eager ran
Thick round the lists their lances stood,
Like blasted pines in Ettucke wood,
Lo Branksome many a look they threw,
The combatants' approach to view,
And banded many a word of boast,
About the knight each favoured most

- 15 Meantime full anxious was the Dame,
For now arose disputed clam,
Of who should fight for Deloraine,
'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestane
They 'gan to reckon kin and rent, *and*
And frowning brow on brow was bent,
But yet not long the strife—for, lo!
Himself, the Knight of Deloraine,
Strong, as it seemed, and free from pain

In armour shrouded from top to toe
 Appeared, and craved the combat due
 The Dame her charm sweetest did use
 And the fierce chiefs their claims to the new.

- 16 When for the lists they sought the place,
 The stately Lady's will was done
 Did noble Howard hold,
 Unarmed by her side he walked,
 And much, in courteous phrase they talked
 Of feats of arms of old
 Costly his garb—his helmet buff
 I all o'er his doublet, chapel of buff,
 With satin stretched, and lined;
 Tawny his boot, and gold his stir,
 His cloak was all of Poland fur,
 His hose with silver twined
 His Bilboa blade, by Marchmont's side,
 Hung in a broad and studded hilt,
 Hence, in rude phrase, the Ponderosa still
 Called noble Howard "Belted Will"

- 17 Behind Lord Howard and the Dame,
 Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,
 Whose foot-cloth swept the ground,
 White was her wimple, and her veil,
 And her loose locks a chaplet pale
 Of white-st roses bound,
 The lordly Angus, by her side,
 In courtesy to cheer her tried,
 Without his aid, her hand in vain
 Had strove to guide her brodered rein
 He deemed, she shuddered at the sight
 Of warriors met for mortal fight,
 But cause of terror, all unguessed,
 Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
 When, in their chairs of crimson placed,
 The Dame and she the barriers greeted

- 18 Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch
 An English knight led forth to view,
 Scute rued the boy his present plight,
 So much he longed to see the fight
 Within the lists, in knightly pride,
 High Home and haughty Diere side
 Their leading staffs of steel they wield,
 As marshals of the mortal field
 While to each knight their care assigned
 Like vantage of the sun and wind
 Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,
 In king and queen and warden's name,
 That none, while lasts the strife,
 Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,
 Aid to a champion to afford,

On peril of his life.
And not a breath the silence broke,
Till thus the alternate heralds spoke —

ENGLISH HERALD

- 19 Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,
Good knight and true, and freely born,
Amends from Deloraine to crave,
For foul despitous scathe and scorn
He sayeth, that William of Deloraine
Is traitor false by Border laws,
Thus with his sword he will maintain,
So help him God, and his good cause!

SCOTTISH HERALD

- 20 Here standeth William of Deloraine,
Good knight and true, of noble strain,
Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain
Since he bore arms, ne'er soiled his coat,
And that, so help him God above!
He will on Musgrave's body prove,
He lies most foully in his throat!

LORD Dacre.

Forward, brave champions, to the fight!
Sound trumpets! —

LORD HOME

—— "God defend the right!"

Then, Tevot! how thine echoes rang,
When bugle-sound and trumpet-clang
Let loose the martial foes,
And in mid list, with shield poised high,
And measured step and wary eye,
The combatants did close

- 21 Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
Ye lovely listeners, to hear
How to the ræ the helms did sound,
And blood poured down from many a wound,
For desperate was the strife, and long,
And either warrior fierce and strong
But, were each dame a listening knight,
I well could tell how warriors fight,
For I have seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing
Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing
And scorned, amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life

- 22 'Tis done, 'tis done' that fatal blow
Has stretched him on the bloody plain,
He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no!
Thence never shalt thou rise again!

- He chokes in blood—some friendly hand
 Undo the visor's buried band,
 Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
 And give him room for life to gasp!
 O, bootless aid!—haste, holy Friar,
 Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
 Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
 And smoothe his path from earth to heav'n
- 23 In haste the holy Friar sped,—
 His naked foot was dyed with red,
 As through the lists he ran,
 Unmindful of the shouts on high,
 That hailed the conqueror's victory,
 He roused the dying man,
 Loose waved his silver beard and hair,
 As o'er him he kneeled down in prayer,
 And still the crucifix on high
 He holds before his darkening eye,
 And still he bends an anxious ear,
 His filtering penitence to hear,
 Still props him from the bloody sod,
 Still, even when soul and body part,
 Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
 And bids him trust in God!
 Unheard he prays,—the death pang's o'er!—
 Richard of Musgrave breathes no more
- 24 As if exhausted in the fight,
 On musing o'er the piteous sight,
 The silent victor stands,
 His beaver did he not unclasp,
 Marked not the shouts, felt not the grasp
 Of gratulating hands
 When lo! strange cries of wild surprise,
 Mingled with seeming terror, rise
 Among the Scottish bands,
 And all, amid the thronged array,
 In panic haste gave open way
 To a half-naked ghostly man,
 Who downward from the castle ran
 He crossed the barriers at a bound,
 And wild and haggard looked around,
 As dizzy, and in pain,
 And all, upon the armed ground
 Knew William of Deloraine!
 Each ladye sprung from seat with speed,
 Vaulted each marshal from his steed
 "And who art thou," they cried,
 "Who hast this battle fought and won?"
 His plumed helm was soon undone—
 "Cranstoun of Teviot side

For this fair prize I've fought and won, —
And to the Ladye led her son.

- 5 Full oft the rescued boy she kissed,
And often pressed him to her breast,
For, under all her dauntless show,
Her heart had throbb'd at every blow
Yet not Lord Cranstoun deign'd she greet,
Though low he kneel'd at her feet —
He lists not tell what words were made,
What Douglas, Home and Howard said —
For Howard was a generous foe —
And how the clan united pray'd,
The Ladye would the feud forego,
And deign to bless the nuptial hour
Of Cranstoun's Lord and Teviot's Flower

- 26 She looked to river, looked to hill,
Thought on the Spirit's prophecy,
Then broke her silence stern and still, —
“Not you, but Fate, has vanquish'd me,
Their influence kindly stars may shower
On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
For pride is quelled, and love is free” —
She took fair Margaret by the hand,
Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand,
That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she —
“As I am true to thee and thine,
Do thou be true to me and mine”
This clasp of love our bond shall be ;
For this is your betrothing day,
And all these noble lords shall stay,
To grace it with their company” —

- 27 All as they left the list'd plain,
Much of the story she did gain,
How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,
And of his Page, and of the Book,
Which from the wounded knight he took,
And how he sought her castle high,
That morn, by help of gramarye,
How, in Sir William's armour dight,
Stolen by his Page, while slept the knight,
He took on him the single fight
But half his tale he left unsaid,
And lingered till he join'd the maid —
Cared not the Ladye to betray
Her mystic arts in view of day,
But well she thought, ere midnight came,
Of that strange Page the pride to tame,
From his foul hands the Book to save,
And send it back to Michael's grave —
Needs not to tell each tender word
Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord, D

Nor how she told of former woes,
 And how her bosom fell and rose,
 While he and Musgrave banded blows—
 Needs not these lovers' joys to tell,
 One day, fair maids, you'll know them well

- 28 William of Deloraine, some chance
 Had wakened from his death like trance,
 And thought that, in the listed plum,
 Another, in his arms and shield,
 Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,
 Under the name of Deloraine
 Hence, to the field, unarmed, he ran,
 And hence his presence scared the char,
 Who held him for some fleeting wrath,
 And not a man of blood and breath
 Not much this new ally he loved,
 Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,
 He greeted him right heartily
 He would not waken old debate,
 For he was void of rancorous hate,
 Though rude, and scant of courtesy,
 In ruds he spilt but seldom blood,
 Unless when men at arms withstood,
 Or, as was meet, for deadly feud
 He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,
 Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe
 And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,
 When on dead Musgrave he looked down,
 Grief darkened on his rugged brow,
 Though half disguised with a frown,
 And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
 His foeman's epitaph he made
- 9 "Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here!
 I ween, my deadly enemy,
 For if I slew thy brother dear,
 Thou slewest a sister's son to me,
 And when I lay in dungeon dark,
 Of Naworth Castle, long months three,
 Till ransomed for a thousand mark,
 Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.
 And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,
 And thou wert now alive, as I,
 No mortal man should us divide,
 Till one, or both of us, did die
 Yet rest thee God! for well I know,
 I ne'er shall find a nobler foe
 In all the northern counties here,
 Whose word is, Snaffle, spur, and spear,
 Thou wert the best to follow gear
 'Twas pleasure, as we looked behind,
 To see how thou the chase couldst wind,

Cheer the dark bloodhound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray!
I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
Dark Musgrave were alive again"—

So mourned he, till Lord Dacie's band,
Were bowning back to Cumberland
They raised brave Musgrave from the field,
And laid him on his bloody shield,
On levelled lances, four and four,
By turns, the noble burden bore
Before, at times, upon the gale,
Was heard the Minstrel's plaintive wail,
Behind, four priests, in sable stole,
Sung requiem for the warrior's soul;
Around, the horsemen slowly rode,
With trailing pikes the spearmen trod,
And thus the gallant knight they bore,
Through Liddesdale, to Leven's shore,
Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,
And laid him in his father's grave

The harp's wild notes, though hushed the song,
The mimic march of death prolong,
Now seems it far, and now a-near,
Now meets, and now eludes the ear,
Now seems some mountain-side to sweep,
Now faintly dies in valley deep,
Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail,
Now the sad requiem, loads the gale;
Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
Rung the full choir in choral stave

After due praise, they bade him tell,
Why he, who touched the harp so well,
Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
Wander a poor and thankless soil,
When the more generous Southern Land
Would well requite his skilful hand

The Aged Harper, howsoe'er
His only friend, his harp, was dear,
Liked not to hear it ranked so high
Above his flowing poesy
Less liked he still, that scornful jeer
Misprized the land he loved so dear;
High was the sound, as thus again
The Bard resumed his minstrel strain

CANTO SIXTH.

I BREATHE there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!

Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,

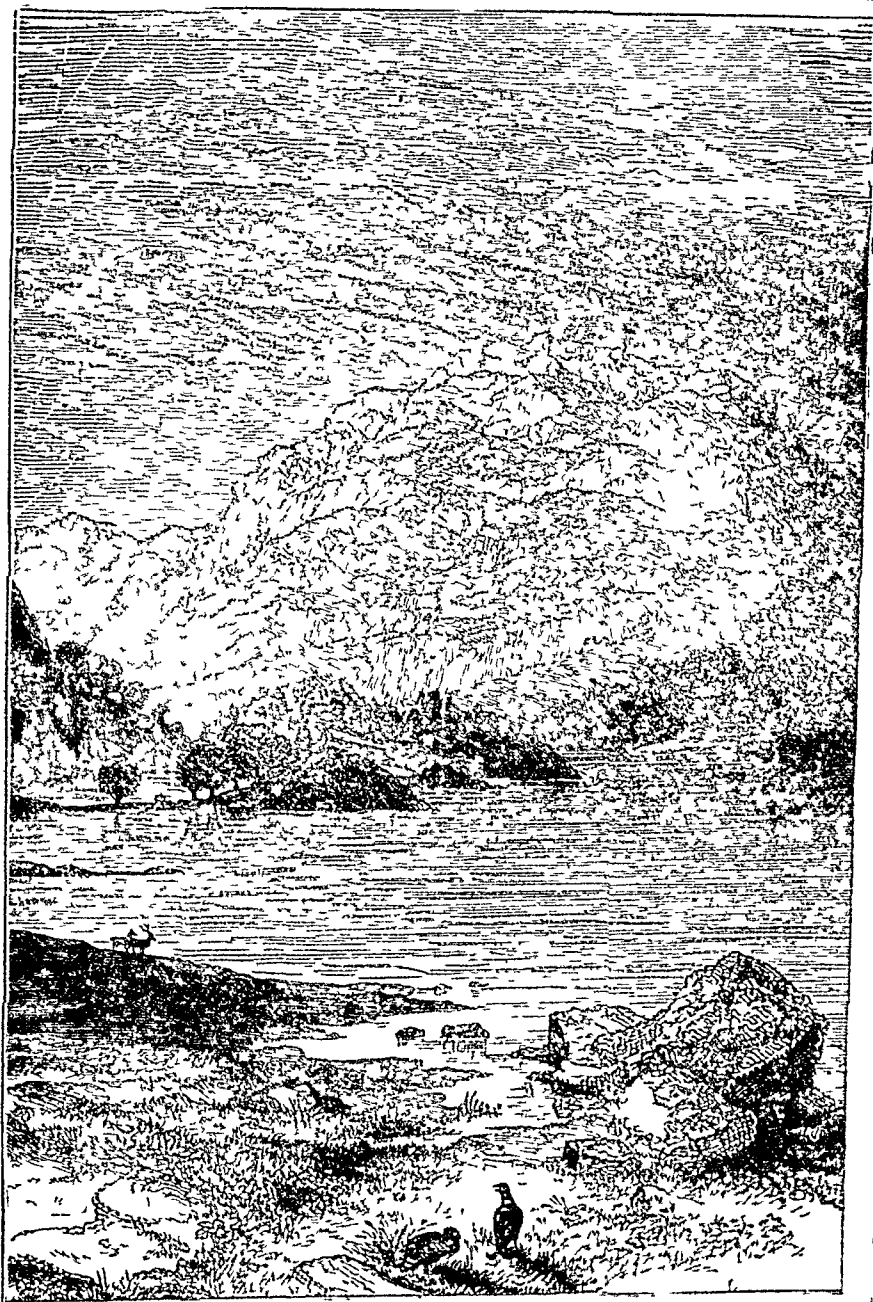
From wandering on a foreign strand —
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell,
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprang,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung

- 2 O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand!
Still, as I view each well-known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams were!
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.

By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way,
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick's break,
Although it chill my withered cheek,
Still lay my head by Teviot stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The Bard may draw his pining groan

- 3 Not scorned like me, to Branksome Hall
The Minstrels came, at festive call,
Trooping they came, from near and far,
The jovial priests of mirth and war,
Alike for feast and fight prepared,
Battle and banquet both they shared
Of late, before each martial clan,
They blew their death-note in the van,
But now, for every merry mate,
Rose the portcullis' iron grate,
They sound the pipe, they strike the string,
They dance, they revel, and they sing,
Till the rude turrets shake and ring

- 4 Me lists not at this tide declare
The splendour of the spousal rite,
How mustered in the chapel fair
Both maid and matron, squire and knight
Me lists not tell of owches rare,



"Land of the mountain and the flood"

Of mantles green, and braided hair,
 And kirtles furred with miniver,
 What plumage waved the altar round,
 How spurs, and ringing chainlets, sound
 And hard it were for Bird to speak
 The changeful hue of Maignet's cheek,
 That lovely hue which comes and flies,
 As awe and shame alternate rise!

- 5 Some birds have sung, the Ladye high
 Chapel or altar came not nigh,
 Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,
 So much she feared each holy place
 False slanders these —I trust right well,
 She wrought not by forbidden spell,
 For mighty words and signs have power
 O'er spirits in planetary hour
 Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,
 Who tamper with such dangerous art.

But this for faithful truth I say,—

The Ladye by the altar stood,
 Of sable velvet her array,

And on her head a crimson hood,

- With pearls embroidered and entwined,
 Girded with gold, with ermine lined,
 A merlin sat upon her wrist,
 Held by a leash of silken twist

- 6 The spousal rites were ended soon
 'Twas now the merry hour of noon,
 And in the lofty arch'd hall
 Was spread the gorgeous festival
 Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
 Marshalled the rank of every guest,
 Pages, with ready blade, were there,
 The mighty men to carve and share
 O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
 And princely peacock's gilded train,
 And o'er the boar-head, garnished brave,
 And cygnet, from St Mary's wave,
 O'er ptarmigan and venison,
 The priest had spoke his benison
 Then rose the riot and the din,
 Above, beneath, without, within!
 For, from the lofty balcony,
 Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery,
 Their clanging bowls old warriors quaffed,
 Loudly they spoke, and loudly laughed,
 Whispered young knights, in tone more mild,
 To ladies fair, and ladies smiled
 The hooded hawks, high perched on beam,
 The clamour joined with whistling scream,
 And flapped their wings, and shook their bells,

In concert with the clay hound's yell
 Round go the shields of red and blue
 From Border to Orkney, or the Hebrides,
 Their tails the busy reeve's pipe,
 And all a-mirth and revelry.

- 7 The Goblin Page o' mirth and
 No opportunity of ill,
 Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
 To raise debate and jestery,
 Till Conrad, lord of Wolf-forest,
 By nature fierce, and stern to his core,
 And now in humour high and bold,
 About some steel-bellied deed
 High words to words were saying;
 Smote with his gauntlet stout Hethered,
 A hot and hardy Rutherford,
 Whom men call Diel on Dray the S.,
 He took it on the Page's eye,
 Henthill had driven these steeds away
 Then Hosard, Home, and Douglas,
 The hindling discord to compose
 Stern Rutherford right hilted,
 But bit his glove, and took his head —
 A fortnight thence, in Inglesood,
 Stout Conrad, cold, and drenched in blood,
 His bosom goied with many a wound,
 Was by a woodman's hound-dog found,
 Unknown the manner of his death,
 Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath,
 But ever from that time, 'twas said,
 That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

- 8 The Dwarf, who scared his master's eye
 Might his foul treachery espie,
 Now sought the castle buttery,
 Where many a yeoman, bold and free,
 Revelled as merrily and well
 As those that sat in lordly selle
 Watt Tinkinn, there, did frankly raise
 The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-Breast,
 And he, as by his breeding bound,
 To Howard's merry men sent it round.
 To quit them, on the English side,
 Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
 "A deep crouse to you fair bride!"
 At every pledge, from vat and pul,
 Tormed forth, in floods, the nut-brown ale
 While shout the riders every one
 Such day of mirth ne'er cheered them clai
 Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
 When in the clench the buck was taken

- 9 The wily Page, with vengeful thought,
Remembered him of Tinnin's yen,
And swore it should be dearly bought
That ever he the arrow drew
First, he the yeoman did molest,
With bitter gibe and trunting jest;
Told, how he fled at Solway strife,
And how Hob Armstrong cheered his wife,
Then, chunning still his powerful arm,
At unawares he wrought him harm,
From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
Dashed from his lips his can of beer,
Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
With bodkin pierced him to the bone
The venom'd wound, and festering joint,
Long after rued that bodkin's point
The startled yeoman swore and spurned,
And board and flagons overturned,
Riot and clamour wild began,
Back to the hall the Urchin ran;
Took in a darkling nook his post,
And grinned and muttered, "Lost! lost! lost!"
- 10 By this, the Dame, lest further fry
Should mar the concord of the day
Had bid the Minstrels tune their lay
And first stept forth old Albert Grene
The Minstrel of that ancient name
Was none who struck the harp so well,
Within the land Debateable,
Well friended too, his hardy kin,
Whoever lost, were sure to win,
They sought the beeyes, that made their broth,
In Scotland and in England both
In homely guise, as nature bide,
His simple song the Borderer said

ALBERT GRENE.

- 11 It was an English Ladye bright,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
And she would marry a Scottish knight,
For Love will still be lord of all
Blithely they saw the rising sun,
When he shone fair on Carlisle wall
But they were sad ere day was done,
Though Love was still the lord of all
Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
For ye that Love was lord of all
For she had lands, both meadow and lee
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

And he swore her death, ere he would see
A Scottish knight the lord of all

- 12 That wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fur on Carlisle wall,)
When dead, in her true love's arm, she fell,
For Love was still the lord of all

He pierced her brother to the heart,
Where the sun shines fur on Carlisle wall.—
So perish all, would true love part,
That Love may still be lord of all !

And then he took the cross divine,
Where the sun shine, fur on Carlisle wall.
And died for her sake in Palestine,
So Love was still the lord of all

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,
(The sun shines fur on Carlisle wall,)
Pray for their souls who died for love,
For Love shall still be lord of all !

- 13 As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port,
For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,
Renowned in haughty Henry's court.
There rung thy harp, unrivalled long,
Fitztraver of the silver song !
The gentle Surrey loved his lyre—
Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?
His was the hero's soul of fire,
And his the bard's immortal name,
And his was love, exalted high
By all the glow of chivalry

- 14 They sought, together, climes afar,
And oft, within some olive grove,
When evening came, with twinkling star,
They sung of Surrey's absent love
His step the Italian peasant stryed,
And deemed that spirits from on high,
Round where some hermit saint was laid,
Were breathing heavenly melody,
So sweet did harp and voice combine
To praise the name of Geraldine

- 15 Fitztraver ! O what tongue may say
The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,
When Surrey, of the deathless lay,
Ungateful Tudor's sentence slew ?
Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
His harp called wrath and vengeance down.
He left, for Naworth's non towers,
Windsor's green glades, and courtly bowers,

And, faithful to his patron's name,
 With Howard still but never came,
 Lord William's foremost favourite he,
 And chief of all his minstrelsy

FITZFRANKE

- 16 'I was All-souls' eye, and Surry's heart beat high,
 He heard the midnight-bell with anxious start,
 Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
 When wise Cornelius promised, by his art,
 To show to him the lady of his heart,
 Albeit betwixt them roared the ocean gum,
 Yet so the sage had light to ply his put,
 That he should see her form in life and limb
 And mark if still she loved and still she thought of him.
- 17 Dark was the vaulted room of grammarie,
 To which the Wizard led the gallant Knight,
 Saw that before a mirror, huge and high,
 A hallowed taper shed a glimmering light
 On mystic implements of magic might,
 On cross, and character, and talisman,
 And amethyst, and altar, nothing bright
 For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,
 A watch light, by the bed of some departing man
- 18 But soon, within that mirror, huge and high,
 Was seen a self-emitted light to glimmer,
 And forms upon its breast the earl gan spy,
 Cloudy and indistinct, as feverish dream,
 Tall, slow arranging, and defined, they seem
 To form a lordly and a lofty room,
 Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,
 Placed by a couch of Agri's silken loom,
 And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in gloom
- 19 'Twas all the pageant—but how passing fair
 The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind!
 O'er her white bosom strayed her hazel hair,
 Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined,
 All in her night robe loose, she lay reclined,
 And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine
 Some strain, that seemed her inmost soul to find —
 That favoured strain was Surry's raptured line
 That fair and lovely form, the Lady Geraldine
- 20 Slow rolled the clouds upon the lovely form,
 And swept the goodly vision all away —
 So royal envy rolled the murky storm
 O'er my beloved Master's glorious day
 'Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay
 On thee, and on thy children's latest line,
 The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,
 The gory bridal bed, the plundered shrine,
 The murdered Surry's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

- 21 Both Scots, and Southern chiefs, prolong
 Applauses of Fitzriver's valor
 These hated Henry's name & death,
 And those still held the ancient faith —
 Then, from his seat, with lofty air,
 Rose Harold, hard of brave St Clair;
 St Clair, who, feasting high at Home,
 Had with that lord to battle come
 Harold was born where reeling o'er
 Howl round the storm-swept Orkneys,
 Where erst St Clair held princely sway
 O'er isle and islet, strait and bay, —
 Still nods their palace to its fall,
 Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall! —
 Thence oft he marked fierce Pentland rive,
 As if grim Odin rode her wave,
 And watched, the whilst, with vengeful eye,
 And throbbing heart, the struggling sail
 For all of wonderful and wild
 Had rapture for the lonely child
- 22 And much of wild and wonderful
 In these rude isles might Iancy cult,
 For thither came, in times afar,
 Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,
 The Norsemen, trained to spoil and blood,
 Skilled to prepare the raven's food,
 Kings of the main their leaders brave,
 Their barks the dragons of the wave
 And there, in many a stormy vale,
 The Seid had told his wondrous tale,
 And many a Runic column high
 Had witnessed grim idolatry
 And thus had Harold, in his youth,
 Learned many a Saga's rhyme uncouth, —
 Of that Ser-Snake, tremendous curled
 Whose monstrous circle girds the world
 Of those dread Maids, whose hideous veil
 Muddens the battle's bloody swell
 Of chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
 By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
 Ransacked the graves of warriors old,
 Their falcions wrenched from corpses' hold,
 Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,
 And bade the dead arise to arms!
 With war and wonder all on flame,
 To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
 Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
 He learned a milder minstrelsy,
 Yet something of the Northern spell
 Mixed with the softer numbers well

HAROLD

- 23 O listen, listen, ladies gay!
 No haughty feat of arms I tell
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
 That mourns the lovely Rosabelle
 — "Moor, moor! the barge, ye gallant crew!
 And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day
 "The blackening wave is edged with white,
 To inch and rock the sea-mews fly,
 The fishers have heard the Water Sprite,
 Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh
 "Last night the gifted Seer did view
 A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay,
 Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch,
 Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"—
 "'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
 To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
 But that my ladye-mother there
 Sits lonely in her castle-hall
 "'Tis not because the ring they ride,
 And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
 But that my sire the wine will chide,
 If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle"—
 O'er Roslin all that dreary night
 A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam,
 'Twas broader than the watch-fire light,
 And redder than the bright moon-beam
 It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
 It ruddied all the copse-wood glen,
 'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
 And seen from craved Hawthornden
 Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
 Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie;
 Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
 Sheathed in his iron panoply
 Seemed all on fire within, around,
 Deep sacristy and altar's pile,
 Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
 And glimmered all the dead men's mail
 Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
 Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
 So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
 The lordly line of high St Clair
 There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
 Lie buried within that proud chapelle,

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

Each one the holy vault doth hold—
 But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!
 And each St Clair was buried there,
 With candle, with book, and with bell,
 But the sea caves rang, and the wild wind sang,
 The dirge of lovely Rosabelle

- 24 So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
 Scarce marked the guests the dirge even lay,
 Though, long before the sinking day
 A wondrous shade involved them all
 It was not eddying mist or fog,
 Driven by the sun from fen or bog,
 Of no eclipse had ages told,
 And yet, as it came on apace,
 Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
 Could scarce his own stretched hand behold
 A secret horror checked the feast,
 And chilled the soul of every guest,
 Even the high Dame stood half-right,
 She knew some evil on the blast,
 The elvish Page fell to the ground,
 And, shuddering, muttered, "Foul! foul! foul!"
- 25 Then, sudden, through the darkened air
 A flash of lightning came
 So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
 The castle seemed on flame,
 Glanced every rafter of the hall,
 Glanced every shield upon the wall
 Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone,
 Were instant seen, and instant gone,
 Full through the guests' bedazzled band
 Resistless flashed the levin brand,
 And filled the hall with smouldering smoke,
 As on the elvish Page it broke
 It broke, with thunder long and loud,
 Dismayed the brave, appalled the proud —
 From sea to sea the harum rung
 On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal,
 To arms the startled warders sprung
 When ended was the dreadful roar,
 The elvish Dwarf was seen no more!
- 26 Some heard a voice in Brinksome Hall,
 Some saw a sight, not seen by all,
 That dreadful voice was heard by some
 Cry, with loud summons, "GALLIN, COME!"
 And on the spot where burst the brand,
 Just where the Page had flung him down,
 Some saw an arm, and some a hand,
 And some the waving of a gown
 The guests in silence prayed and shool,
 And terror dimmed each lofty look

But none of all the astonished thrum
 Was so dismayed as Deloraine,
 His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,
 'Twas feared his mind would ne'er return;
 For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
 Like him, of whom the story ran,
 Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man
 At length, by fits, he darkly told,
 With broken hint, and shuddering cold-
 That he had seen, right certainly,
A shape with amice wrapped around,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea,
 And knew—but how it mattered not—
 'T was the wizard, Michael Scott

- 27 The anxious crowd, with horror pale,
 All trembling, heard the wondrous tale
 No sound was made, no word was spoke,
 Till noble Angus silence broke,
 And he a solemn sacred plight
 Did to St Bryde of Douglas make,
 That he a pilgrimage would take
 To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
 Of Michael's restless sprite
 Then each, to ease his troubled breast,
 To some blessed saint his prayers addressed—
 Some to St Modan made their vows,
 Some to St Mary of the Lowes,
 Some to the Holy Rood of Lisle,
 Some to Our Lady of the Isle,
 Each did his patron witness make
 That he such pilgrimage would take,
 And Monks should sing, and bells should toll,
 All for the weal of Michael's soul
 While vows were ta'en, and prayers were pry
 'Tis said the noble Dame, dismayed,
 Renounced, for aye, dark magic's aid

- 28 Nought of the bridal will I tell,
 Which after in short space befell,
 Nor how brave sons and daughters fair
 Blessed Teviot's Flower and Crinstoun's heir
 After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain
 To wake the note of mirth again,
 More meet it were to mark the day
 Of penitence and prayer divine,
 When pilgrim-chiefs, in sad array
 Sought Melrose' holy shrine

- 29 With naked foot, and sackcloth vest,
 And arms unfolded on his breast,
 Did every pilgrim go,

The standers by might hear weath
Footstep, or voice, or high draua breath,
Through all the lengthened roa
No lordly look, no martial stride,
Gone was their glory, and their pride,
Forgotten their renown,
Silent and slow, like ghosts, they glit
To the high altar's hallowed spot,
And there the, kneeled them down,
Above the suppliant chieftains vne
The banners of departed brave,
Beneath the lettered stones were laid
The ashes of their fathers dead
From many a garnished niche around
Stern saints, and tortured martyrs, frowned

- 30 And slow up the dim aisle afar,
With sable cowl and scapular,
And snow white stoles, in order due,
The holy Fathers, two and two,
In long procession came,
Taper, and host, and book they bare,
And holy banner, flourished fair
With the Redeemer's name
Above the prostrate pilgrim band
The mitred Abbot stretched his hand,
And blessed them as they kneek'd,
With holy cross he signed them all,
And pray'd they might be sage in hall,
And fortunate in field
Then mass was sung, and prayers were said,
And solemn requiem for the dead,
And bells tolled out their mighty peal,
For the departed spirit's weal;
And ever in the office close
The hymn of intercession rose,
And far the echoing aisles prolong
The awful burthen of the song,—

DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA,

While the pealing organ rung
Were it meet with sacred strain
To close my lay, so light and vain,
Thus the holy Fathers sung —

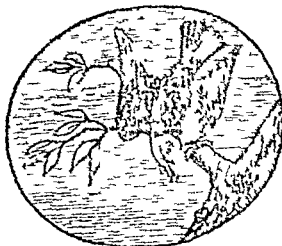
HYMN FOR THE DEAD

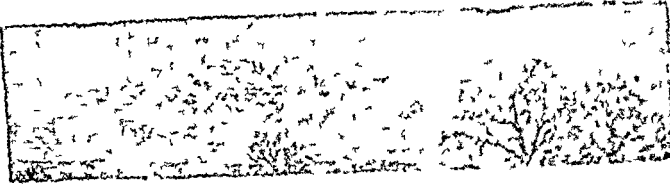
- 31 That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?
When, shrivelling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll, —

When louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead!

O! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!

HUSHED is the harp—the Minstrel gone
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No—close beneath proud Newark's tower
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower,
A simple hut, but there was seen
The little garden edged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean
There sheltered wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days,
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begged before
So passed the winter's day, but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark-heath
When thistles sung in Hare-herd shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourished, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day,
And noble youths, the strun to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer,
And Yarrow, as he rolled along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.





MARMION; A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

Alas! that Scottish Maid should sing
 The combat where her lover fell!
 That Scottish Bard should wail the string,
 The triumph of our foes to tell!—*La Vie &c*

TO
 THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
 HENRY, LORD MONTAGU,
&c &c &c

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION, 1803

It is hardly to be expected, that an Author, whom the Public have honoured with some degree of applause, should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the Author of *MARMION* must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first Poem may have procured him. The present Story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character: but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the Author was, if possible, to apprise his Readers, at the outset, of the dye of his Story, and to prepare them for the manners of the Age in which it is laid. Any Historical narrative, far more an attempt at Epic composition, exceeded his plan of a Romantic Tale: yet he may be permitted to hope, from the popularity of *THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREY*, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times, upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the Public.

The Poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST

TO WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, ESQ

Ashestiel, Ettrick Fens

NOVEMBER'S sky is chill and diew,
 November's leaf is red and sear
 Late, grazing down the steepy linn,
 Thit hems our little guden in,
 Low in its dark and narrow glen,
 You scauce the rivulet might ken.

So thick the tangled green-wood grew,
 So feeble tilled the streamlet through
 Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
 Through bush and brier, no longer green,
 An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
 Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
 And, foaming brown with doubled speed,
 Hurries its waters to the Tweed

No longer Autumn's glowing red
 Upon our Forest hills is shed,
 No more, beneath the evening beam,
 Fan Tweed reflects then purple gleam,
 Away hath passed the heather-bell,
 That bloomed so rich on Needpath-fell,
 Sallow his brow, and russet brie
 Are now the sister-heights of Yan
 The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
 To sheltered dale and down are driven,
 Where yet some faded herbage pines,
 And yet a watery sunbeam shines
 In meek despondency they eye
 The withered sward and wintry sky,
 And far beneath their summer hill,
 Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's ill
 The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
 And wraps him closer from the cold,
 His dogs no merry circles wheel,
 But, shivering, follow at his heel,
 A cowering glance they often cast,
 As deeper moans the gathering blast

My lumps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
 As best befits the mountain child,
 Feel the sad influence of the hour,
 And wail the daisy's vanished flower,
 Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
 And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
 And birds and lambs again be gay,
 And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes The daisy's flower
 Again shall paint your summer bower,
 Again the hawthorn shall supply
 The garlands you delight to tie,
 The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
 The wild birds carol to the round,
 And while you frolic light as they,
 Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
 New life revolving summer brings
 The gen'ral call dead Nature hears
 And in her glory reappears.

But oh! my country's wintry state
 What second spring shall renovate?
 What powerful call shall bid arise
 The buried wailike, and the wise?
 The mind, that thought for Britain's weal,
 The hand, that grasped the victor steel?
 The vernal sun new life bestows
 Even on the meanest flower that blows,
 But vainly, vainly, may he shine,
 Where glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine
 And vainly pierce the solemn gloom
 That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,
 O never let those names depart!
 Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
 Who victor died on Gadite wave,
 To him, as to the burning leyin,
 Short, bright, resistless course was given;
 Where'er his country's foes were found,
 Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
 Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
 Rolled, blazed, destroyed,—and was no more

Nor mourn ye less his perished worth,
 Who bade the conqueror go forth,
 And launched that thunderbolt of war
 On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar,
 Who, born to guide such high emprise,
 For Britain's weal was early wise,
 Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
 For Britain's sins, an early grave,
 His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
 A bridle held the pride of power,
 Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
 And served his Albion for herself,
 Who, when the frantic crowd amain
 Strained at subjection's bursting rein,
 O'er their wild mood full conquest gained,
 The pride, he would not crush, restrained,
 Showed their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
 And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's laws.

Hadst thou but lived, though stripped of power,
 A watchman on the lonely tower,
 Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
 When fraud or danger were at hand,
 By thee, as by the beacon-light,
 Our pilots had kept course aright,
 As some proud column, though alone,
 Thy strength had propped the tottering throne
 Now is the stately column broke,
 The beacon light is quenched in smoke,

The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill !

Oh, think, how to his latest day,
When Death, just hovering, claimed his prey,
With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood,
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way !
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray ;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear, —
He, who preserved them, PITT lies here !

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his Rival slumbers nigh,
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er FOX's tomb
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed, and wanted most,
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to ply, not wound,
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine,
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow, —
They sleep with him who sleeps below
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed,
And sacred be the last long rest !
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes patriots, bards, and kings,
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung,
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke agen,
All peace on earth, good-will to men,
If ever from an English heart,
O *love* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record that FOX a Briton died !
When Europe crouched to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was bartered by a timorous slave,

Even then dishonour's peace he spurned,
 The sullied olive-branch returned,
 Stood for his country's glory fast,
 And ruled her colours to the mast.
 Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
 A portion in this honoured grave,
 And ne'er held marble in its trust
 Of two such wondrous men the dust

With more than mortal powers endowed,
 How high they soared above the crowd!
 Theirs was no common party race,
 Jostling by dark intrigue for place,
 Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
 Shook realms and nations in its jar;
 Beneath each banner proud to stand,
 Looked up the noblest of the land,
 Till through the British world were known
 The names of PITT and FOX alone
 Spells of such force no wizard gave
 E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
 Though his could drain the ocean dry,
 And force the planets from the sky
 These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
 The wine of life is on the lees
 Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
 For ever tombed beneath the stone,
 Where, —taming thought to human pride!—
 The mighty chiefs sleep side by side
 Drop upon FOX's grave the tear,
 It will trickle to his rival's bier,
 O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
 And FOX's shall the notes rebound
 The solemn echo seems to cry,—
 'Here let their discord with them die,
 Speak not for those a separate doom
 Whom Fate made brothers in the tomb,
 But search the land of living men
 "Where wilt thou find their like again?"

Hest, ardent Spirits! till the cries
 Of dying Nature bid you rise,
 Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
 The leaden silence of your hearse
 Then, O how impotent and vain
 This grateful tributary strain!
 Though not unmarked from northern clime,
 We heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme
 His Gothic harp has o'er you rung,
 The bard you deigned to praise, your deathless
 names has sung

Stay yet, illusion, stay awhile,
 My wildered fancy, still beguile!

From this high theme how can I part,
 Ere half unloaded is my heart !
 For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
 And all the raptures fancy knew,
 And all the keener rush of blood
 That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,
 Were here a tribute mean and low,
 Though all their mingled streams could flow—
 Woe, wonder, and sensation high,
 In one spring-tide of ecstasy —
 It will not be—it may not last—
 The vision of enchantment's past
 Like frost-work in the morning ray,
 The fancied fabric melts away,
 Each Gothic arch, memorial stone,
 And long, dim, lofty aisle are gone,
 And, lingering last, deception dear,
 The choir's high sounds die on my ear
 Now slow return the lonely dawn,
 The silent pastures bleak and brown,
 The farm begirt with copse-wood wild,
 The gambols of each frolic child,
 Mixing their shrill cries with the tone
 Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
 Thus Nature disciplines her son
 Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
 And waste the solitary day,
 In plucking from yon fen the reed,
 And watching it float down the Tweed,
 Or idly list the shrilling lay
 With which the milk-maid cheers her way,
 Marking its cadence rise and fall
 As from the field, beneath her pail,
 She trips it down the uneven dale,
 Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
 The ancient shepherd's tale to learn,
 Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
 Lest his old legends tire the ear
 Of one, who, in his simple mind,
 May boast of book-learned taste refined.

But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell,
 (For few have read romance so well)
 How still the legendary lay
 O'er poet's bosom holds its sway,
 How on the ancient minstrel strain
 Time lays his palsied hand in vain,
 And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
 By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
 Still throb for fear and pity's sake
 As when the Champion of the Lake

Enters Morgana's fated house,
 Or in the Chapel Perilous,
 Despising spells and demons' force
 Holds converse with the unburied corse;
 Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move
 (Alas! that lawless was their love)
 He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
 And freed full sixty knights, or when,
 A sinful man, and unconfessed,
 He took the Sangrean's noisy quest,
 And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
 He might not view with waking eye.

The mightiest chiefs of British song
 Scorned not such legends to prolong
 They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,
 And mix in Milton's heavenly theme,
 And Dryden, in immortal strain,
 Had raised the Table Round again,
 But that a ribald king and court
 Bide him toil on, to make them sport,
 Demanded for their niggard pay,
 Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
 Licentious satire, song, and play,
 The world defrauded of the high design,
 Profaned the God-given strength, and marred
 the lofty line

Warmed by such names, well may we then,
 Though dwindled sons of little men,
 Essay to break a feeble lance
 In the fair fields of old romance,
 Or seek the moated castle's cell,
 Where long through talisman and spell,
 While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,
 Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept
 There sound the harpings of the North,
 Till he awake and sally forth,
 On venturesome quest to prick again,
 In all his arms, with all his train,
 Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
 Fry, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
 And wizard with his wand of might,
 And errant maid on palfrey white
 Around the Genius weave their spells,
 Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells,
 Mystery, half veiled and half revealed,
 And Honour with his spotless shield,
 Attention, with fixed eye, and Feru,
 That loves the tale she shrinks to hear,
 And gentle Courtesy, and Faith,
 Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death,



"Dry set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep"

And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword

Well has thy fair achievement shown,
A worthy meed may thus be won.
Ytene's oaks—beneath whose shade
Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,
And that Red King, who, while of old
Through Boldrewood the chase he led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled—
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renewed such legendary strain,
For thou hast sung, how He of Gaul,
That Amadis so famed in hall,
For Orrian, foiled in fight
The Necromancer's felon might;
And well in modern verse hast wove
Partenopev's mystic love,
Hear then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day

CANTO FIRST

THE CASTLE

- I DAY set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loop-hole grates where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seemed forms of giant height
Their armour, as it caught the rays,
Flashed back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light
- St George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading day
Less bright, and less, was flung,
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the Donjon tower,
So heavily it hung
The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barred,
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The warder kept his guard,
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border gathering song

The soldiers of the guard,
 With musket, pike, and morion,
 To welcome noble Marmion,
 Stood in the Castle-yard,
 Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
 The gunner held his bristled yate,
 For welcome-shot prepared—
 Entered the train, and such a clang,
 As then through all his turrets rang,
 Old Norham never heard

- 10 The guards their morrice pikes advanced,
 The trumpets flourished brave,
 The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
 And thundering welcome gave;
 A blithe salute, in martial sort,
 The minstrels well might sound,
 For as Lord Marmion crossed the court,
 He scattered angel round
 "Welcome to Norham, Marmion!
 Stout heart, and open hand!
 Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
 Thou flower of English land!"—

- 11 Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,
 With silver scutcheon round their neck,
 Stood on the steps of stone,
 By which you reach the Donjon gate,
 And there, with herald pomp and state,
 They hailed Lord Marmion
 They hailed him Lord of Fontenaye,
 Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbrye,
 Of Tamworth tower and town,
 And he, their courtesy to requite,
 Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight,
 All as he lighted down
 "Now largesse, largesse, Lord Marmion,
 Knight of the crest of gold!
 A blazoned shield, in battle won,
 Ne'er guarded heart so bold!"—

- 12 They marshalled him to the Castle hall,
 Where the guests stood all aside,
 And loudly flourished the trumpet call,
 And the heralds loudly cried,
 —"Room, lordings, room for Lord Marmion,
 With the crest and helm of gold!
 Full well we know the trophies won
 In the lists at Cottiswold
 There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
 Gainst Marmion's force to stand,
 To him he lost his ladye-love,
 And to the King his land

Ourselves beheld the listed field,
 A sight both sad and fair,
 We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,
 And saw his saddle bare,
 We saw the victor win the crest
 He wears with worthy pride,
 And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,
 His foeman's scutcheon tied
 Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight!
 Room, room, ye gentles gray,
 For him who conquered in the right,
 Marmion of Fontenoye!"—

- 13 Then stepped to meet that noble lord,
 Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
 Baron of Fwisell, and of Ford,
 And Captain of the Hold
 He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
 Raised o'er the pavement high,
 And placed him in the upper place—
 They feasted full and high
 The whiles a Northern harper rude
 Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
*"How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all
 Stout Willmondestwick,
 And hard-drinking Dick,
 And Hugue of Harador, and Will o' the Will,
 Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
 And taken his life at the Deadman's-shaw"*—
 Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could brook
 The harper's barbarous lay,
 Yet much he prized the pains he took,
 And well those pains did pry
 For lady's suit, and minstrel's strain,
 By knight should ne'er be heard in vain

- 14 "Now, good Lord Marmion," Heron says,
 'Of your fair courtesy,
 I pray you bide some little space,
 In this poor tower with me
 Here may you keep your arms from rust,
 May breathe your war-horse well,
 Seldom hath passed a week, but grist
 Or feat of arms befell
 The Scots can rein a mettled steed,
 And love to couch a spear,—
 St George! a stirring life they lead,
 That have such neighbours near
 Then stay with us a little space,
 Our northern wars to learn,
 I pray you for your lady's grace'—
 Lord Marmion's brow grew stern

- 15 The Captain marked his altered look
 And gave a squire the sign,
 A mighty vessel lowl he took,
 And crowned it high with wine
 "Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion:
 But first I pry thee fair,
 Where hast thou left that Page of thine,
 That used to serve thy cup of wine,
 Whose beauty was so rare?
 When last in Roby towers we met,
 The boy I closely eyed,
 And often marked his cheek, were wet
 With tears he fain would hide
 His was no rugged horse boy's hand,
 To burnish shield, or sharpen bridle,
 Or saddle battle steel,
 But meeter seemed for lady fair,
 To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,
 Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
 The slender silk to lead
 His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
 His bosom—when he sighed,
 The russet doublet's rugged fold
 Could scarce repel its pride!
 Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
 To serve in lady's bower?
 Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
 A gentle paramour?"—
- 16 Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;
 ' He rolled his kindling eye,
 With pun his rising wrath suppress'd,
 Yet made a calm reply
 "That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,
 He might not brook the northern air
 More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
 I left him sick in Lindisfarne
 Enough of him — But, Heron, say,
 Why does thy lovely lady gay
 Disdain to grace the hall to day?
 Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
 Gone on some pious pilgrimage?"—
 He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
 Whispered light tales of Heron's dame
- 17 Unmarked, at least unrecked, the taunt,
 Careless the Knight replied,
 "No bird, whose feathers gaily flout,
 Delights in cage to bide
 Norham is grim, and grated close,
 Hemmed in by battlement and fosse
 And many a darksome tower,
 And better loves my lady bright

To sit in liberty and light,
 In fair Queen Margaret's bower
 We hold our greyhound in our hand,
 Our falcon on our glove,
 But where shall we find leish or band
 For dame that loves to rove?
 Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
 She'll stoop when she has tired her wing'—

18 "Nay, if with Royal James's bride
 The lovely lady Heron bide,
 Behold me here a messenger,
 Your tender greetings prompt to bear,
 For, to the Scottish court addressed,
 I journey at our king's behest,
 And pray you, of your grace, provide
 For me, and mine, a trusty guide
 I have not ridden in Scotland since
 James backed the cause of that mock prince,
 Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
 Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
 Then did I march with Surrey's power,
 What time we razed old Ayton tower'—

19 "For such-like need, my lord, I trow,
 Norham can find you guides enow,
 For here be some have pricked as far
 On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar,
 Have drunk the monks of St Bothan's ale,
 And driven the beeves of Lauderdale,
 Harried the wifes of Greenlaw's goods,
 And given them light to set their hoods"—

20 "Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,
 "Were I in warlike wise to ride,
 A better guard I would not lack
 Than your stout forayers at my back
 But, as in form of peace I go,
 A friendly messenger, to know
 Why through all Scotland, near and far,
 Their king is mustering troops for war,
 The sight of plundering Border spears
 Might justify suspicious fears,
 And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,
 Break out in some unseemly bioil.
 A herald were my fitting guide;
 Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;
 Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
 Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."—

21 The Captain mused a little space,
 And passed his hand across his face
 —"Fain would I find the guide you want,
 But ill may spare a pursuivant,

The only men that safe can ride
 Mine errands on the Scottish side
 Then, though a bishop built this fort,
 Few holy brethren here resort,
 Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
 Since our last siege, we have not seen
 The mass he might not sing or say,
 Upon one sainted mear a day,
 So, safe he sat in Durham side,
 And prayed for our success the while
 Our Northam vicar, woe betide,
 Is all too well in case to ride
 The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
 The wildest war-horse in your train,
 But then, no spearman in the hall
 Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl
 Friar John of Tillmouth were the man
 A blithesome brother at the can,
 A welcome guest in hall and bower,
 He knows each castle, town, and to let
 In which the wine and ale is good,
 'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood
 But that good man, as ill befalls,
 Hath seldom left our castle walls,
 Since on the vigil of St Bede,
 In evil hour, he crossed the Tweed
 To teach Dame Alison her creed
 Old Bughtrig found him with his wife;
 And John, an enemy to strife,
 Sans frock and hood, fled for his life
 The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
 That, if again he ventures o'er,
 He shall shrieve penitent no more
 Little he loves such risks, I know,
 Yet, in your guard, perchance will go "

- 22 Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
 Carved to his uncle, and that lord,
 And reverently took up the word
 "Kind uncle, woe were we each one,
 If harm should hap to Brother John
 He is a man of mirthful speech,
 Can many a game and gambol teach,
 Full well at tables can he play,
 And sweep at bowls the stake away,
 None can a lustier carol bowl,
 The needfullest among us all,
 When time hangs heavy in the hall,
 And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
 And we can neither hunt, nor ride
 A foray on the Scottish side
 The vowed revenge of Bughtrig rude

May end in worse than loss of hood
 Let Fuar John, in safety, still
 In chimney-corner snore his fill,
 Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill,
 Last night, to Norham there came one
 Will better guide Lord Marmion "—
 "Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fav,
 Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say"

- 23 "Here is a holy Palmer come,
 From Salem first, and last from Rome,
 One that hath kissed the blessed tomb,
 And visited each holy shrine,
 In Araby and Palestine,
 On hills of Armenie hath been,
 Where Noah's ark may yet be seen,
 By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
 Which parted at the prophet's rod,
 In Sinai's wilderness he saw
 The Mount, where Israel heard the law,
 'Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
 And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
 He shows St James's cockle-shell,
 Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell,
 And of that Grot where Olives nod,
 Where, darling of each heart and eye,
 From all the youth of Sicily,
 Saint Rosalie retuned to God

- 24 "To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,
 Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
 Cuthbert of Dunham and Saint Bede,
 For his sins' pardon hath he prayed
 He knows the passes of the North,
 And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth,
 Little he eats, and long will wake,
 And drinks but of the stream or lake
 This were a guide o'er moor and dale
 But, when our John hath quaffed his ale,
 As little as the wind that blows,
 And warms itself against his nose,
 Kens he, or cares, which way he goes "—

- 25 "Gramerey!" quoth Lord Marmion,
 "Full loth were I, that Fuar John,
 That venerable man, for me,
 Were placed in fear, or jeopardy,
 If this same Palmer will me lead
 From hence to Holy-Rood,
 Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
 Instead of cockle-shell, or beard,
 With angels fur and good
 I love such holy rambles, still
 They know to charm a werry hill,

With song, romance, or lay
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend at the last,
They bring to cheer the way."

- 26 "Ah! noble sir," young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
"This man knows much, perchance even more
Than he could learn by holy lore
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks as at some unseen thing
Last night we listened at his cell,
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,
He murmured on till morn, how'er
No living mortal could be near
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain
As other voices spoke again
I cannot tell—I like it not—
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
No conscience clear, and void of wrong,
Can rest awake, and pray so long
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have marked ten aves and two creeds"—

- 27 "Let pass," quoth Marmion, "by my fay,
This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch-fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company,
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This Palmer to the castle-hall"

The summoned Palmer came in place,
His sable cowl o'erhung his face,
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought,
The scallop shell his cap did deck,
The crucifix around his neck
Was from Loretto brought,
His sandals were with travel tore,
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore,
The faded palm branch in his hand
Showed pilgrim from the Holy Land

- 28 When as the Palmer came in hall,
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,
Or had a stacher step withal,
Or looked more high and keen
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
As he his peer had been
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil,
His cheek was sunk, almost the whole

His eye looked haggard wild
 Poor wretch! the mother that him bare,
 If she had been in presence there,
 In his wan face, and sun-burned hair,
 She had not known her child
 Dinger, long travel want, or woe,
 Soon change the form that best we know—
 For deadly fear can time outgo,
 And blanch at once the hair,
 Hard toil can roughen form and face,
 And want can quench the eye's bright grace
 Not does old age a wrinkle trace
 More deeply than despair
 Happy whom none of these befall,
 But this poor Palmer knew them all.

- 29 Lord Marmion then his boon did ask,
 The Palmer took on him the task,
 So he would march with morning tide,
 To Scottish court to be his guide
 —“But I have solemn vows to pay,
 And may not linger by the way,
 To fair Saint Andrews bound,
 Within the ocean-cave to pray,
 Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
 From midnight to the dawn of day,
 Sung to the billows' sound,
 Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
 Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispe.
 And the crazed brain restore —
 Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring
 Could back to peace my bosom bring,
 Or bid it throb no more!”—

- 30 And now the midnight draught of sleep,
 Where wine and spices richly steep,
 In massive bowl of silver deep,
 The page presents on knee
 Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
 The Captain pledged his noble guest,
 The cup went through among the rest,
 Who drained it merrily,
 Alone the Palmer passed it by,
 Though Selby pressed him courteously
 This was the sign the feast was o'er,
 It hushed the merry wassel roar,
 The minstrels ceased to sound
 Soon in the castle nought was heard,
 But the slow footstep of the guard,
 Pacing his sober round

31. With early dawn Lord Marmion rose
 And first the chapel doors unclose,

Then, after morning rites were done,
 (A hasty mass from Friar John,)
 And knight and squire had brook'd their fast,
 On rich substantial repast,
 Lord Marmion's bugle blew to horse.
 Then came the stirrup cup in course,
 Between the Baron and his host,
 No point of courtesy was lost
 High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
 Solemn excuse the Captain made,
 Till, fling from the gate, had pass'd
 That noble train, their Lord the last
 Then loudly rung the trumpet call,
 Thundered the cannon from the wall,
 And shook the Scottish shore,
 Around the castle eddied, slow,
 Volumes of smoke as white as snow,
 And hid its turrets hoar,
 Till they rolled forth upon the air,
 And met the river breezes there,
 Which gave again the prospect fair

 INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND

TO THE REV JOHN MARRIOT, M.A.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

THE scenes are desert now, and bare,
 Where flourish'd once a forest fair,
 When these waste glens with copse were lined,
 And peopled with the hart and hind
 Yon thorn—peirceance whose prickly spears
 Have fenced him for three hundred years,
 While fell around his green compeers—
 Yon sonely thorn, would he could tell
 The changes of his parent dell,
 Since he, so gray and stubborn now,
 Waved in each breeze a sapling bough,
 Would he could tell how deep the shade,
 A thousand mingled branches made,
 How broad the shadows of the oak,
 How clung the rowan to the rock,
 And through the foliage showed his herd,
 With narrow leaves, and berries red,
 What pines on every mountain sprung
 O'er every dell what bushes hung,
 In every breeze what aspens shook,
 What alders shaded every brook!

“Here, in my shade,” methinks he'd say,
 “The mighty stag at noontide lay,
 The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,
 (The neighbouring dingle bears his name,)”

With lurching step around me prowl,
 And stop against the moon to howl,
 The mountain boar, on battle set,
 His tusks upon my stem would whet;
 While doe and roe, and red-deer good
 Have bounded by through gay green-wood
 Then oft, from Newark's ivy tower,
 Sallied a Scottish monarch's power
 A thousand vassals mustered round,
 With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound,
 And I might see the youth intent,
 Guard every pass with cross-bow bent,
 And through the brake the rangers stalk,
 And falconers hold the ready hawk,
 And foresters, in green-wood trim,
 Lead in the leash the gaze-hounds grim,
 Attentive as the bratchet's bay
 From the dark covert drove the prey,
 To slip them as he broke away
 The startled quarry bounds amain,
 As fast the gallant greyhounds strain,
 Whistles the arrow from the bow,
 Answers the haquebuss below,
 While all the rocking hills reply,
 To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry,
 And bugles ringing lightsomely"—

Of such proud huntings, many tales
 Yet linger in our lonely dales,
 Up pathless Ettricke, and on Yarrow,
 Where erst the Outlaw drew his arrow
 But not more blithe that sylvan court
 Than we have been at humbler sport,
 Though small our pomp, and mean our game,
 Our mirth, dear Marriot, was the same
 Remember'st thou my greyhounds true?
 O'erholt, or hill, there never flew,
 From slip, or leish, there never sprang,
 More fleet of foot, or sure of fang
 Not dull, between each merry chase
 Passed by the intermitted space,
 For we had fur resource in store,
 In Classic, and in Gothic lore
 We marked each memorable scene,
 And held poetic talk between,
 Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along
 But had its legend, or its song
 All silent now—for now are still
 Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill!
 No longer, from thy mountains dun,
 The yeoman hears the well-known gun,
 And, while his honest heart glows warm,

At thought of his paternal farm,
 Round to his mates a hummer fill,
 And drinks, "The Chieftain of the Hill,"
 No fury forms, in Yarrow's bosom,
 Trip o'er the hills, or tread the power,
 Fair as the elves whom Janet saw,
 By moonlight, dance on Catterthugh,
 No youthful baron's left to grace
 The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chair,
 And apt, in manly step and tone,
 The majesty of Oberon
 And she is gone, whose lovely face
 Is but her least and lowest grace,
 Though if to Sylphid Queen 'twere given,
 To show our earth the charms of heaven,
 She could not glide along the air,
 With form more light, or face more fair
 No more the widow's deafened ear
 Grows quick, that lady's step to hear:
 At noontide she expects her not,
 Nor busies her to trim the cot,
 Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
 Or pensive cools her orphans' meal,
 Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
 The gentle hand by which they're fed

From Yair,—which hills so closely hurl,
 Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
 Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
 Till all his eddying currents boil,—
 Her long-descended lord is gone,
 And left us by the stream alone.
 And much I miss those sportive boys,
 Companions of my mountain joys,
 Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
 When thought is speech, and speech is truth
 Close to my side, with what delight
 They pressed to hear of Wallace's might,
 When, pointing to his airy mound,
 I called his ramparts holy ground!
 Kindled their brows to hear me speak,
 And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,
 Despite the difference of our years,
 Return again the glow of theirs
 Ah, happy boys! such feelings pure,
 They will not, cannot long endure,
 Condemned to stem the world's rude tide,
 You may not linger by the side,
 For Fate shall thrust you from the shore,
 And passion ply the sail and oar
 Yet cherish the remembrance still,
 Of the lone mountain, and the rill,

For trust, dear boys, the time will come
 When fiercer transport shall be dumb,
 And you will think right frequently,
 But, well I hope, without a sigh,
 On the free hours that we have spent,
 Together, on the brown hill's bent

When, musing on companions gone,
 We doubly feel ourselves alone,
 Something, my friend, we yet may gain,
 There is a pleasure in this pain
 It soothes the love of lonely rest,
 Deep in each gentler heart impressed
 'Tis silent amid worldly toils,
 And stifled soon by mental broils,
 But, in a bosom thus prepared,
 Its still small voice is often heard,
 Whispering a mingled sentiment,
 'Twa't resignation and content
 Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
 By lone St Mary's silent lake,
 Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
 Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge,
 Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
 At once upon the level brink,
 And just a trace of silver sand
 Marks where the water meets the land
 Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
 Each hill's huge outline you may view,
 Shaggy with heath, but lonely, bare,
 Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,
 Save where, of land, yon slender line
 Bears thwart the lake the scattered pine
 Yet even this nakedness has power,
 And aids the feeling of the hour
 Not thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
 Where living thing concealed might lie,
 Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,
 Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell,
 There's nothing left to fancy's guess,
 You see that all is loneliness
 And silence aids—though these steep hills
 Send to the lake a thousand rills,
 In summer tide, so soft they weep,
 The sound but lulls the ear to sleep,
 Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
 So still is the solitude

Nought living meets the eye or ear,
 But well I ween the dead are near,
 For though, in feudal strife, a foe
 Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,

Yet still, beneath the hallo'd soul,
The peasant rest him from his toil,
And, dying, bids his bones be laid
Where erst his simple father pray'd

If age had tamed the passions' strife,
And fate had cut my ties to life,
Here, have I thought, 'twere sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage
Where Milton loved to spend his age
'Twere sweet to mark the setting day
On Bourhope's lonely top decay,
And as it faint and feeble died
On the broad lake, and mountain's side,
To say, "Thus pleasures fade away,
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and gray,"
Then gaze on Dryhope's ruined tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded flower
And when that mountain sound I heard,
Which bids us be for storm prepared,
The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the Tempest brings,
'Twere sweet, ere yet his terror rave,
To sit upon the Wizard's grave,
That Wizard Priest's whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust,
On which no sunbeam ever shines—
(So superstition's creed divines)
Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,
Heave her broad billows to the shore,
And mark the wild swans mount the gale
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave
Then, when against the driving hail
No longer might my plaid avail,
I seek to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp, and trim my fire
I here ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had all its sway,
And in the bittern's distant shriek
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the Wizard Priest was come,
To claim again his ancient home!
And bade my busy fancy range,
To frame him fitting shape and strange,
Till from the task my brow I cleared,
And smiled to think that I had feared

But, chief, 'twere sweet to think such lite,
Though but escape from fortune's strife)

Something most matchless good and wise,
A great and grateful sacrifice,
And deem each hour to musing given
A step upon the road to heaven

Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease
Such peaceful solitudes dispense
He loves to drown his bosom's joy
Amid the elemental war
And my black Palmer's choice had been
Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene
There eagles scream from isle to shore,
Down all the rocks the torrents roar,
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven,
Through the rude barriers of the lake,
Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream below,
Diving, as if condemned to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prisoned by enchanter's spell,
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell
And well that Palmer's form and mien
Had suited with the stormy scene,
Just on the edge, straining his ken
To view the bottom of the den,
Where, deep, deep down, and far within,
Boils with the rocks the roaring inn,
Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale

Marriot, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has rung
Then list to me, and thou shalt know
Of this mysterious Man of Woe

CANTO SECOND

THE CONVENT

- I THE breeze, which swept away the smoke
Round Norham Castle rolled,
When all the loud artillery spoke,
With lightning-flash, and thunder-stroke,
As Marmion left the Hold
It curled not Tweed alone, that breeze;
For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
It freshly blew, and strong,

Where, from high Whitha' cloistered pile
Bound to Saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle
It bore a bark along,

Upon the gale she stooped her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing hoar.

The merry seamen hugh'd, to see
Then gallant ship so lustily

Furrow the green sea foam
Much joyed they in their hoisted freight;
For, on the deck, in chur of state,

The Abbess of St Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns the galley graced

2 'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,
Like birds escaped to green wood shades,
Then first flight from the cage,

How timid, and how curious too,
For all to them was strange and new,
And all the common sights they view

Their wonderment engage
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
With many a benedicite,

One at the rippling surge grew pale,
And would for terror pray,
Then shrieked, because the sea dog nigh,
His round black head, and sparkling eye,

Reared o'er the foaming spray,
And one would still adjust her veil,
Disordered by the summer gale,
Perchance lest some more worldly eye

Her dedicated charms might spy,
Perchance, because such action graced
Her fair turned arm and slender waist
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure shun,
The Abbess and the Novice Clare

3 The Abbess was of noble blood,
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook
Fair too she was, and kind had been
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
I or her a timid lover sigh,
Nor knew the influence of her eye,
Love, to her ear, was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame,
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
Bounded within the cloister-wall
The deadliest sin her mind could reach
Was of monastic rule the breach,
And her ambition's highest aim,

To emulate Saint Hilda's fame
 For this she gave her ample dower
 To raise the convent's eastern tower,
 For this, with carving rare and quaint,
 She decked the chapel of the saint,
 And gave the relic-shrine of cost,
 With ivory and gems embossed
 The poor her convent's bounty blessed,
 The pilgrim in its halls found rest

- 4 Black was her garb, her rigid rule
 Reformed on Benedictine school,
 Her cheek was pale, her form was spare
 Vigils, and penitence austere,
 Had early quenched the light of youth,
 But gentle was the dame in sooth,
 Though, vain of her religious sway.
 She loved to see her maids obey,
 Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
 And the nuns loved their Abbess well
 Sad was this voyage to the dame,
 Summoned to Lindisfarne, she came,
 There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old,
 And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold
 A chapter of Saint Benedict,
 For inquisition stern and strict,
 On two apostates from the faith,
 And, if need were, to doom to death

5. Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
 Save this, that she was young and fair,
 As yet a novice unprofessed,
 Lovely, and gentle, but distressed
 She was betrothed to one now dead,
 Or worse, who had dishonoured fled
 Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
 To one, who loved her for her land.
 Herself, almost heart-broken now,
 Was bent to take the vestal vow,
 And shroud, within Saint Hilda's gloom.
 Her blasted hopes and withered bloom

- 6 She sat upon the galley's prow,
 And seemed to mark the waves below,
 Nay seemed, so fixed her look and eye,
 To count them as they glided by
 She saw them not—'twas seeming all—
 For other scene her thoughts recall,—
 A sun-scorched desert, waste and bare,
 Not wave, nor breezes, murmured there,
 There saw she, where some careless hand
 O'er a dead corpse had heaped the sand.
 To hide it till the jackals come
 To tear it from the scanty tomb—

See what a woful look was given
As she rised up her eyes to her en'

- 7 Lovely, and gentle, and discrete —
These charms might tame the fiercest bear,
Harper have sung, and poets told,
That he, in fury uncontrolled,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood
But passions in the human frame
Oft put the lion's rage to shame,
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sordid avarice in league,
Had practised, to their bowl and life
Against the incurable harmless lie
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay
Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet gray.

- 8 And now the vessel shirk the strand
Of mountaneous Northumberland,
Towns, towers, and hills, successive rise
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes
Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
And Tynemouth's spire, and bay,
They marked, amid her trees, the hill
Of lofty Serton-Delaval,
They saw the Blythe and Warbeck floods
Rush to the sea through swelling woods,
They passed the tower of Widderington,
Mother of many a valiant son,
At Coquet-isle their beads they tell,
To the good Saint who owned the cell,
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name,
And next, they crossed themselves, to hear
The whitening breakers sound so near
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar
On Dunstanborough's caverned shore,
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked they here,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown,
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reached the Holy Island's bay
- 9 The tide did now its flood-mark gain
And girdled in the Saint's domain,
For with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle,
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way,
Twice every day, the waves efface
Of staves and sandalled feet the trace

As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The Castle, with its battled walls,
The ancient Monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle

10. In Saxon strength that Abbey frowned,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, low on low
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shifted stalk,
The arcades of an alley'd walk
To emulate in stone
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had poured his impious rage in vain,
And needful was such strength to these
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the wind's eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilt in a later style
Showed where the spoiler's hand had been,
Not but the wasting sea-lance keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And mouldered in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower
Yet still entire the Abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued

11. Soon as they neared his turrets strong
The madens raised Saint Hilda's song,
And with the sea-wave and the wind,
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
And made harmonious close,
Then, answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drowned amid the breakers' roar.

According chorus rose
Down to the haven of the Isle,
The monks and nuns in order file,
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim,
Banner, and cross, and relics there,
To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare.
And, as they caught the sounds on air
They echoed back the hymn
The islanders in joyous mood,
Rushed emulously through the flood
To hale the bark to land
Conspicuous by her veil and hood

- Signing the cross the Abbess stood,
 And blessed them with her hand
 12 Suppose we not the welcome said.
 Suppose the Convent banquet made:
 All through the holy dome,
 Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
 Wherever vestal maid might pry,
 Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,
 The stranger sisters loam
 Till fell the evening damp with dew,
 And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
 For there, even summer night is chill,
 When, having strayed and gazed their fill,
 They closed around the fire,
 And all, in turn, essayed to print
 The rival merits of their saint,
 A theme that ne'er can tire
 A holy maid, for, be it known,
 That their saint's honour is their own
- 13 Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
 How to their house three barons bold
 Must menial service do,
 While horns blow out a note of shame,
 And monks cry 'Fye upon your name'
 In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,
 Saint Hilda's priest ye slew"—
 "This, on Ascension-day, each year,
 While labouring on our harbour pier,
 Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear.'
 They told, how in their convent cell
 A Saxon princess once did dwell,
 The lovely Edelfled,
 And how, of thousand snakes, each one
 Was changed into a coil of stone,
 When holy Hilda prayed,
 Themselves, within their holy bound,
 Their stony folds had often found
 They told, how ser-fowls' pinnions sail,
 As over Whitby's towers they sail,
 And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,
 They do their homage to the saint
- 14 Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail
 To vie with these in holy tale,
 His body's resting-place, of old,
 How oft their patron changed, they told,
 How, when the rude Dane burned their pile,
 The monks fled forth from Holy Isle,
 O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
 From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
 Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore
 They rested them in fair Melrose,

But though, alive, he loved it well,
 Not there his relics might repose,
 For, wondrous tale to tell!
 In his stone coffin forth he rides,
 (A ponderous bark for river tides)
 Yet light as gossamer it glides,
 Downward to Tillmouth cell
 Nor long was his abiding there,
 For southward did the saint repair,
 Chester-le-Street, and Rippon, saw
 His holy corpse, ere Waidilaw
 Hailed him with joy and fear.
 And, after many wanderings passed,
 He chose his lordly seat at last,
 Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
 Looks down upon the Wear
 There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
 His relics are in secret laid,
 But none may know the place,
 Save of his holiest servants three,
 Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
 Who share that wondrous grace

- 15 Who may his miracles declare!
 Even Scotland's dauntless king, and he.
 (Although with them they led
 Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
 And Lodon's knights, all sheathed in mail,
 And the bold men of Teviotdale,)
 Before his standard fled
 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
 Edged Alfred's-fulchion on the Dane,
 And turned the Conqueror back again,
 When, with his Norman bowyer band,
 He came to waste Northumberland
- 16 But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn,
 If on a rock by Lindisfarne,
 Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
 The ser-born beads that bear his name
 Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
 And said they might his shape behold,
 And hear his awful sound,
 A deadened clang,—a huge dim form,
 Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm
 And night were closing round
 But this, as tale of idle fame,
 The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim
- 17 While round the fire such legends go,
 Far different was the scene of woe,
 Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
 Council was held of life and death

It was more dark and lone, that vault,
 Than the worst dungeon cell,
 Old Colwulf built it, for his fault,
 In penitence to dwell,
 When he, for cowl and beads, laid down
 The Saxon battle-axe and crown
 This den, which, chilling every sense
 Of feeling, hearing, sight,
 Was called the Vault of Penitence,
 Excluding air and light,
 Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made
 A place of burial for such dead
 As, having died in mortal sin,
 Might not be laid the church within
 'Twas now a place of punishment;
 Whence if so loud a shriek were sent
 As reached the upper air,
 The hearers blessed themselves, and said
 The spirits of the sinful dead
 Bemoaned their torments there

18 But though, in the monastic pile,
 Did of this penitential isle
 Some vague tradition go,
 Few only, save the Abbot, knew
 Where the place lay, and still more few
 Were those, who had from him the clew
 To that dread vault to go
 Victim and executioner
 Were blind fold when transported there.
 In low dark rounds the riches hung,
 From the rude rock the side walls sprung,
 The grave stones, rudely sculptured o'er,
 Half sunk in earth, by time half worn,
 Were all the pavement of the floor,
 The mildew drops fell one by one,
 With tinkling plish, upon the stone,
 A cresset, in an iron chain,
 Which served to light this drear domain,
 With damp and darkness seemed to strive
 As if it scarce might keep alive,
 And yet it dimly served to show
 The awful conclave met below

9 There, met to doom in secrecy,
 Were placed the heads of convents three
 All servants of Saint Benedict,
 The statutes of whose order strict
 On iron table lay,
 In long black dress, on seats of stone,
 Behind were these three judges shown,
 By the pale cresset's ray
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda's there

Sate for a space with visage bare,
 Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
 And tear-drops that for pity fell,
 She closely drew her veil
 Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
 By her proud mien and flowing dress,
 Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,
 And she with awe looks pale
 And he, that Ancient Man, whose sight
 Has long been quenched by age's mists,
 Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,
 Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace is shown,
 Whose look is hard and stern,—
 Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style,
 For sanctity called, through the isle,
 The Saint of Lindisfarne

20. Before them stood a guilty pair,
 But, though in equal fate they share
 Yet one alone deserves our care
 Her sex and page's dress belied,
 The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
 Obscured her charms, but could not hide
 Her cap down o'er her face she drew;
 And, on her doublet breast,
 She tried to hide the badge of blue,
 Lord Marmion's falcon-crest
 But, at the Prioress' command,
 A Monk undid the silken band
 That tied her tresses fair,
 And raised the bonnet from her head,
 And down her slender form they spread
 In ringlets rich and rare
 Constance de Beverley they know,
 Sister professed of Fontevraud,
 Whom the church numbered with the dead
 For broken vows, and convent fled

21. When thus her face was given to view
 (Although so pallid was her hue,
 It did a ghastly contrast bear,
 To those bright ringlets glistening fair,
 Her look composed, and steady eye,
 Bespoke a matchless constancy;
 And there she stood so calm and pale,
 That, but her breathing did not fail,
 And motion slight of eye and head,
 And of her bosom, warranted
 That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
 You might have thought a form of war
 Wrought to the very life, was there
 So still she was, so pale, so fair

- 22 Her comrade was a sordid soul,
 Such as does murder for a need
 Who, but of fear, knows no control,
 Because his conscience, seared and foul
 Feels not the import of his deed,
 One, whose brute-feeling never aspires
 Beyond his own more brute desires
 Such tools the tempter ever needs,
 To do the savagest of deeds,
 For them no visioned terrors daunt,
 Their nights no fancied spectres haunt,
 One fear with them, of all most base,
 The fear of death,—alone finds place.
 This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
 And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
 His body on the floor to dash,
 And crouch, like hound beneath the fast;
 While his mute partner, standing near,
 Waited her doom without a tear
- 23 Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
 Well might her pitiless terror speak
 For there were seen, in that dark wall,
 Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall
 Who enters at such grisly door
 Shall never, I ween, find exit more
 In each a slender meil was hid,
 Of roots, of water, and of bread.
 By each, in Benedictine dress,
 Two haggard monks stood motionless
 Who, holding high a blazing torch,
 Showed the grim entrance of the porch
 Reflecting back the smoky beam,
 The dark-red walls and arches gleam
 Hewn stones and cement were displayed,
 And building tools in order laid
- 24 These executioners were chose
 As men who were with mankind foes
 And, with despite and envy fired,
 Into the cloister had retired,
 Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
 strove, by deep penance, to efface
 Of some foul crime the stain,
 For, as the vassals of her will,
 Such men the church selected still
 As either joyed in doing ill,
 Or thought more grace to gain,
 If in her cause they wrestled down
 Feelings their nature strove to own
 By strange device were they brought there,
 They knew not how, and knew not where

- 25 And now that blind old Abbot rose,
 To speak the Chapter's doom,
 On those the wall was to enclose,
 Alive, within the tomb,
 But stopped, because that woeful maid,
 Gathering her powers, to speak essayed,
 Twice she essayed, and twice in vain,
 Her accents might no utterance gain,
 Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
 From her convulsed and quivering lip
 'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
 You seemed to hear a distant rill—
 'Twas ocean's swells and falls,
 For though this vault of sin and fear
 Was to the sounding surge so near,
 A tempest there you scarce could hear,
 So massive were the walls
- 26 At length, an effort sent apart
 The blood that curdled to her heart,
 And light came to her eye,
 And colour dawned upon her cheek,
 A hectic and a fluttered streak,
 Like that left on the Cheviot peak
 By Autumn's stormy sky,
 And when her silence broke at length,
 Still as she spoke, she gathered strength
 And armed herself to bear
 It was a fearful sight to see
 Such high resolve and constancy
 In form so soft and fair
- 27 "I speak not to implore your grace,
 Well know I, for one minute's space,
 Successless might I sue
 Nor do I speak your prayers to gain,
 For if a death of lingering pain,
 To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,
 Vain are your masses too —
 I listened to a traitor's tale,
 I left the convent and the veil,
 For three long years I bowed my pride,
 A horse-boy in his train to ride,
 And well my folly's meed he gave,
 Who forfeited, to be his slave,
 All here, and all beyond the grave—
 He saw young Clari's face more fair,
 He knew her of broad lands the heir,
 Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
 And Constance was beloved no more —
 'Tis an old tale and often told,
 But, did my fate and I wish agree,
 Ne'er had been read in story old,

- Of maiden true betrayed for gold,
That loved, or was avenged, like me!
- 28 "The king approved his favourite's aim;
In vain a rival barred his claim,
Whose faith with Clare's was plight,
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge—and on they came,
In mortal lists to fight
Then oaths are said,
Their prayers are prayed,
Their lances in the rest are laid,
They meet in mortal shock,
And hark! the throng, with thundering cry,
Shout, 'Marmion, Marmion, to the sky!
De Wilton to the block!'
Say ye, who preach heaven shall decide,
When in the lists two champions ride,
Say, was heaven's justice here?
When, loyal in his love and faith,
Wilton found overthrow or death,
Beneath a traitor's spear
How false the charge, how true he fell,
This guilty packet best can tell"—
Then drew a packet from her breast,
Paused, gathered voice, and spoke the rest.
- 29 "Still was false Marmion's bridal stayed,
To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
The hated match to shun
'Ho! shifts she thus?' King Henry cried,
'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were sworn a nun'
One way remained—the king's command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land
I lingered here, and rescue planned
For Clare and for me
This catiff Monk, for gold, did swear,
He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
And, by his drugs, my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice hath undone us both
- 30 "And now my tongue the secret tells,
Not that remorse my bosom swells,
But to assure my soul, that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion
Had fortune my last hope betrayed,
This packet, to the king conveyed,
Had given him to the herdsman's stroke,
Although my heart that instant broke—
Now men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still,

And come he slow, or come he fast,
It is but Death who comes at last.

- 31 "Yet dread me, from my living tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!
If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
Full soon such vengeance will he take
That you shall wish the fiery Dane
Had rather been your guest again
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crosier bends,
The ire of a despotic king
Rides forth upon destruction's wing,
Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep,
Burst open to the sea-winds' sweep,
Some traveller then shall find my bones,
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be"—

- 32 Fixed was her look, and stern her air,
Back from her shoulders streamed her hair,
The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
Stared up erectly from her head,
Her figure seemed to rise more high,
Her voice, despair's wild energy
Had given a tone of prophecy
Appalled the astonished conclave sate,
With stupid eyes, the men of fate
Gazed on the light inspired form,
And listened for the avenging storm,
The judges felt the victim's dread,
No hand was moved, no word was said,
Till thus the Abbot's doom was given,
Raising his sightless balls to heaven —
"Sister, let thy sorrows cease,
Sinful brother, part in peace!"—

From that dire dungeon place of doom,
Of execution too, and tomb,

Paced forth the judges three,
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell
The butcher work that there befell,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery

- 33 An hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day,
But, ere they breathed the fresher air,
They heard the shriekings of despair,
And many a stifled groan
With speed their upward way they take,
(Such speed as age and fear can make)
And crossed themselves for terror's sake,
As, hurrying, tottering on,

Even in the vesper's heavenly tone,
 They seemed to hear a dying groan,
 And bade the passing knell to toll
 For welfare of a parting soul
 Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
 Northumbrian rocks in answer rung,
 To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,
 His beads the wakeful hermit told,
 The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
 But slept ere half a prayer he said,
 So far was heard the mighty knell,
 The stag sprung up on Cheviot I ell,
 Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
 Listed before, aside, behind;
 Then couched him down beside the hound,
 And quirked among the mountain fern,
 To hear that sound so dull and stern

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

To WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ

As the steel, Fiddle Fe!

LIKE April morning clouds, that pass,
 With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
 And imitate, on field and furrow,
 Life's chequered scene of joy and sorrow,
 Like streamlet of the mountain north,
 Now in a torrent racing forth,
 Now winding slow its silver train,
 And almost slumbering on the plain,
 Like breezes of the Autumn day,
 Whose voice inconstant dies away,
 And ever swells again as fast,
 When the ear deems its murmur past,
 Thus various, my romantic theme
 Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream
 Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
 Of Light and Shade's inconstant race,
 Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
 Weaving its maze irregular,
 And pleased, we listen as the breeze
 Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees.
 Then wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
 Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
 I love the licence all too well,
 In sound now lowly, and now strong,
 To raise the desultory song?
 Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime,
 Some transient fit of loftier rhyme
 To thy kind judgment seemed excuse
 For many an error of the muse,

Oft hast thou said, "If still mis-spent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent,
Go, and to tame thy wandering course,
Quaff from the fountain at the source,
Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb
Immortal laurels ever bloom,
Instructive of the feeble bard,
Still from the grave their voice is heard,
From them, and from the paths they showed,
Choose honoured guide and practised road,
Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous days

"Or, deem'st thou not our later time
Yields topic meet for classic rhyme?
Hast thou no elegiac verse
For Brunswick's venerable hearse?
What! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valour bleeds for liberty?
Oh, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivalled light sublime,—
Though martial Austria, and though all
The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
Though banded Europe stood her foes—
The star of Brandenburg arose,
Thou couldst not live to see her beam
For ever quenched in Jena's stream
Lamented chief!—it was not given
To thee to change the doom of heaven,
And crush that dragon in its birth,
Predestined scourge of guilty earth
Lamented chief!—not thine the power,
To save in that presumptuous hour,
When Prussia hurried to the field
And snatched the spear, but left the shield,
Valour and skill 'twas thine to try,
And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.
Ill had it seemed thy silver hair
The last, the bitterest pang to share,
For princedoms rest, and scutcheons riven,
And birthrights to usurpers given,
Thy land's, thy children's wrongs to feel,
And witness woes thou couldst not heal!
On thee relenting Heaven bestows
For honoured life an honoured close,
And when revolves, in time's sure change,
The hour of Germany's revenge,
When, breathing fury for her sake,
Some new Arminius shall awake
Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
To wet his sword on Brunswick's tomb

"Or of the Red-Cross hero teach,

Dauntless in dungeon as on breach
 Alike to him the sea, the shore,
 The brand, the bridle, or the oar,
 Alike to him the war that calls
 Its votaries to the shattered walls,
 Which the grim Turk besmeared with blood,
 Against the Invincible made good,
 Or that, whose thundering voice could wake
 The silence of the polar lake,
 When stubborn Russ, and metalled Swede
 On the warped wave their death game played,
 Or that, where vengeance and affright
 Howled round the father of the fight,
 Who snatched on Alexandria's sand
 The conqueror's wrath with dying hand

" Or, if to touch such chord be thine,
 Restore the ancient tragic line,
 And emulate the notes that rung
 From the wild harp which silent hung
 By silver Avon's holy shore,
 Till twice an hundred years rolled o'er,
 When she, the bold Enchantress, came,
 With fearless hand and heart on flame
 From the pale willow snatched the treasure,
 And swept it with a kindred measure,
 Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
 With Monfort's hate and Basil's love,
 Awakening at the inspired strain,
 Deemed their own Shakespeare lived again "

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging
 With praises not to me belonging,
 In task more meet for mightiest powers,
 Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours
 But say, my Erskine, hast thou weighed
 That secret power by all obeyed,
 Which warps not less the passive mind,
 Its source concealed or undefined,
 Whether an impulse, that has birth
 Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
 One with our feelings and our powers,
 And rather part of us than ours,
 Or whether fither termed the sway
 Of habit, formed in early day?
 Howe'er derived, its force confessed
 Rules with despotic sway the breast,
 And drags us on by viewless chain,
 While taste and reason plead in vain
 Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
 Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
 He seeks not eager to inhale
 The freshness of the mountain gale.

Content to rear his whitened wall
Beside the dank and dull canal?
He'll say, from youth he loved to see
The white sail gliding by the tree
Or see yon weather-beaten hind,
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
Whose tattered plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak,
Through England's laughing meads he goes,
And England's wealth around him flows.
Ask, if it would content him well,
At ease in these gay plains to dwell,
Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the next cottage peeps between?
No! not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range,
Nor for fair Devon's meads forsake
Bennevis gray and Garry's lake

Thus, while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of earlier time,
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song,
Though sighed no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale,
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed,
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled,
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of lowliest green,
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all his round surveyed,
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power,
And marvelled, as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitched my mind
Of forayers, who, with headlong force
Down from that strength had spurred their horse,

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
 Anew, each kind familiar face,
 That brightened at our evening fire,
 From the thatched mansion's gray-lured fire,
 Wise without learning, plain and poor,
 And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood,
 Whose eye in age, quiet, clear, and keen,
 Showed what in youth it glances had been,
 Whose doom discording neighbors sought,
 Content with equity unbought,
 To him the venerable Priest,
 Our frequent and familiar guest,
 Whose life and manners well could print
 Alike the student and the saint,
 Alas! whose speech too oft I brole
 With gambol rude and timeless jol
 For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
 A self-willed imp, a grandame's child,
 But half a plague, and half a jest,
 Was still endured, beloved, caressed

From me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
 The classic poet's well-couped task?
 Nay, Erskine, nay!—on the wild hill
 Let the wild heathbell flourish still,
 Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
 But freely let the woodbine twine,
 And leave untrimmed the eglantine

Nay, my friend, nay—since oft thy praise
 Hath given fresh vigour to my lays,
 Since oft thy judgment could refine
 My flattened thought, or cumbrous line,
 Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
 And in the minstrel spare the friend
 Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
 Flow forth, flow unestrained, my tale!

CANTO THIRD

THE HOSTEL, OR INN

- 1 THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode.
 The mountain path the Palmer showed,
 By glen and streamlet winded still,
 Where stunted birches hid the rill
 They might not choose the lowland road,
 For the Merse forayers were abroad,
 Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
 Had scarcely failed to bar their way
 Oft on the trampling band, from crown
 Of some tall cliff, the deer looked down,
 On wing of jet, from his repose
 In the deep heath, the black-cock rose,
 Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
 Not waited for the bending bow,
 And when the stony path began,
 By which the naked peak they wan,
 Up flew the snowy ptarmigan
 The noon had long been passed before
 They gained the height of Lammermoor,
 Thence winding down the northern way,
 Before them, at the close of day,
 Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay
- 2 No summons calls them to the tower,
 To spend the hospitable hour
 To Scotland's camp the Lord was gone,
 His cautious dame, in bower alone,
 Dierded her castle to uncloze,
 So late, to unknown friends or foes
 On through the hamlet as they paced,
 Before a porch, whose front was graced
 With bush and shagron trimly placed,
 Lord Marmion drew his rein
 The village inn seemed large though rude,
 Its cheerful fire and hearty food
 Might well relieve his train
 Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
 With jingling spurs the court-yard rung,
 They bind their horses to the stall,
 For forage, food, and firing call,
 And various clamour fills the hall :

For still, as squire and archer stared
 On that dark face and matted beard,
 Their glee and game declined
 All grazed at length in silence dead,
 Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
 Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
 Thus whispered forth his mind —
 ‘ Saint Mary ! saw'st thou e'er such sight !
 How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
 Whene'er the fire-brand's fickle light
 Glances beneath his cowl !
 Full on our Lord he sets his eye,
 For his best palfrey, would not I
 Endure that sullen scowl ” —

- 7 But Marmion, as to chase the awe
 Which thus had quelled their hearts, who saw
 The ever-varying fire-light show
 That figure stern and face of woe,
 Now called upon a squire —
 “ Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
 To speed the lingering night away ?
 We slumber by the fire ” —

- 8 “ So please you,” thus the youth rejoined,
 “ Our choicest minstrel's left behind
 Ill may we hope to please your ear,
 Accustomed Constant's strains to hear
 The harp full deftly can he strike,
 And wake the lover's lute alike,
 To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush
 Sings livelier from a spring-tide bush ;
 No nightingale her love-lorn tune
 More sweetly woubles to the moon
 Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
 Detains from us his melody,
 Lavished on rocks, and billows stern,
 Or duller monks of Lindisfarne
 Now must I venture as I may,
 To sing his favourite roundelay ”

- 9 A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
 The air he chose was wild and sad,
 Such have I heard, in Scottish land,
 Rise from the busy harvest band,
 When falls before the mountaineer,
 On lowland plains, the ripened ear
 Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
 Now a wild chorus swells the song
 Oft have I listened, and stood still,
 As it came softened up the hill,
 And deemed it the lament of men
 Who languished for their native glen •

It fell on Marmion's ear,
 And plained as if disgrace and ill,
 And shameful death were near
 He drew his mantle past his face,
 Between it and the band,
 And rested with his head a space
 Reclining on his hand
 His thoughts I scan not, but I ween
 That, could then import have been seen,
 The meanest groom in all the hall,
 That e'er tied courser to a stall,
 Would scarce have wished to be their prey,
 For Lutterward and Fontenaye

- 13 High minds, of native pride and force,
 Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
 Few, for their scourge, mean villains have,
 Thou art the torturer of the brave,
 Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
 Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,
 Even while they writhe beneath the smart
 Of civil conflict in the heart
 For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
 And, smiling, to Fitz Eustace said —
 "Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
 Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,
 Such as in nunneries they toll
 For some departing sister's soul?
 Say, what may this portend?"
 Then first the Palmer silence broke,
 (The livelong day he had not spoke,)
 "The death of a dear friend"

- 14 Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
 Ne'er changed in worst extremity,
 Marmion, whose soul could scantily brook,
 Even from his king, a haughty look,
 Whose accent of command controlled,
 In camps, the boldest of the bold—
 Thought, look, and utterance, failed him now,
 Fallen was his glance, and flushed his brow.
 For either in the tone,
 Or something in the Palmer's look,
 So full upon his conscience strook
 That answer he found none
 Thus oft it happens, that when within
 They shrink at sense of secret sin,
 A feather daunts the brave,
 A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
 And proudest princes veil their eyes
 Before their meanest slave
- 15 Well might he falter!—by his aid
 Was Constance Beverley betrayed,

- Not that he augured of the doom
Which on the living closed the tomb,
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid,
And wroth, because, in wild despair,
She practised on the life of Clare,
Its fugitive the church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave,
And deemed restraint in convent strange
Would hide her wrongs, and her revenge
Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
Held Romish thunders, idle fear,
Secure his pardon he might hold,
For some slight mulct of penance-gold
Thus judging, he gave secret way,
When the stern priests surprised then prey
His train but deemed the favourite page
Was left behind, to spare his age,
Or other if they deemed, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard
Woe to the vassal, who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!
- 16 His conscience slept—he deemed her well,
And safe secured in distant cell
But, wakened by her favourite lay,
And that strange Palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,
Dark tales of convent vengeance rose,
And Constance, late betrayed and scorned,
All lovely on his soul returned
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimsoned with shame, with terror mute
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms
- 17 "Alas!" he thought, "how changed that mien!
How changed these timid looks have been,
Since years of guilt, and of disguise,
Have steeled her brow, and armed her eyes!
No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks,
Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair,
And I the cause—for whom were given
Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven!—
Would," thought he, as the picture grows,
'I on its stalk had left the rose!
Oh why should man's success remove

The very charms that wake his love!
 Her convent's peaceful solitude
 Is now a prison harsh and rude;
 And, pent within the narrow cell,
 How will her spirit chafe and swell!
 How brook the stern monastic laws!
 The penance how—and I the cause!—
 Vigil and scourge—perhaps even worse,"—
 And twice he rose to cry "to horse!"
 And twice his sovereign's mandate came,
 Like damp upon a kindling flame,
 And twice he thought, "Gave I not charge
 She should be safe, though not at large?
 They durst not, for their island, shred
 One golden ringlet from her head!"

18. While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
 Repentance and reviving love,
 Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
 I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
 Their Host the Palmer's speech had heard.
 And, talkative, took up the word —
 "Ay, reverend Pilgrim, you, who stray
 From Scotland's simple land away,
 To visit realms afar,
 Full often learn the art to know,
 Of future weal, or future woe,
 By word, or sign, or star,
 Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
 If, knight-like, he despises fear,
 Not far from hence,—if fathers old
 Aright our hamlet legend told"—
 These broken words the marvels move,
 (For marvels still the vulgar love,)
 And, Marmion giving licence cold,
 His tale the Host thus gladly told

THE HOST'S TALE

- 19 "A clerk could tell what years have flown
 Since Alexander filled our throne,
 Third monarch of that warlike name,
 And eke the time when here he came
 To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord;
 A braver never drew a sword,
 A wiser never, at the hour
 Of midnight, spoke the word of power;
 The same, whom ancient records call
 The founder of the Goblin Hall
 I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay
 Gave you that cavern to survey
 Of lofty roof, and ample size,
 Beneath the castle deep it lies.
 To hew the living rock profound,

The floor to pave, the arch to round,
 There never toiled a mortal arm,
 It all was wrought by word and charm,
 And I have heard my grandfathers say,
 That the wild clamour and affray
 Of those dread artificers of hell,
 Who laboured under Hugo's spell,
 Sounded as loud as ocean's war
 Among the caverns of Dunbr

- 20 "The king Lord Gifford's castle sought,
 Deep labouring with uncertain thought;
 Even then he mustered all his host,
 To meet upon the western coast,
 For Norse and Danish galleys plied
 Their oars within the firth of Clyde
 There floated Haco's banner trim,
 Above Norwegian warriors' grim,
 Savage of heart, and large of limb,
 Threatening both continent and isle,
 Bute, Arran, Cunningham, and Kyle.
 Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
 Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
 And tarried not his garb to change,
 But, in his wizard habit strange,
 Came forth, a quaint and fearful sight;
 His mantle lined with fox-skins white,
 His high and wrinkled forehead bore
 A pointed cap such as of yore
 Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore,
 His shoes were marked with cross and spell
 Upon his breast a pectoral,
 His zone, of virgin parchment thin,
 Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
 Bore many a planetary sign,
 Combust, and retrograde, and trine,
 And in his hand he held prepared
 A naked sword without a guard
- 21 "Dire dealings with the fiendish race
 Had marked strange lines upon his face,
 Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
 His eyesight dazzled seemed, and dim,
 As one unused to upper day,
 Even his own menials with dismay
 Beheld Sir Knight, the grisly sire,
 In thus unwonted wild attire,
 Unwonted, for traditions run,
 He seldom thus beheld the sun
 'I know,' he said,—his voice was hoarse,
 And broken seemed its hollow force,—
 'I know the cause, although untold,
 Why the king seeks his vassal's hold,

Vainly from me my hege would know
 His kingdom's future weal or woe
 But yet, if strong his arm and heart,
 His courage may do more than art

- 22 “ ‘Of middle air the demons proud,
 Who ride upon the racking cloud,
 Can read, in fixed or wandering star,
 The issue of events afar,
 But still their sullen aid withhold,
 Save when by mightier force controlled
 Such late I summoned to my hall,
 And though so potent was the call
 That scarce the deepest nook of hell
 I deemed a refuge from the spell,
 Yet, obstinate in silence still,
 The haughty demon mocks my skill
 But thou,—who little know'st thy might,
 As born upon that blessed night
 When yawning graves, and dying groan,
 Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown,—
 With untaught valour shalt compel
 Response denied to magic spell—
 ‘Grimey,’ quoth our Monarch free,
 ‘Place him but front to front with me,
 And, by this good and honoured brand,
 The gift of Cam-de-Lion's hand,
 Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,
 The demon shall a buffet bide—
 His bearing bold the wizard viewed,
 And thus, well pleased, his speech renewed—
 ‘There spoke the blood of Malcolm!—mark
 Forth prying hence, at midnight dark,
 The rumpart seek, whose circling crown
 Crests the ascent of yonder down,
 A southern entrance shalt thou find,
 There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
 And trust thine elfin foe to see,
 In guise of thy worst enemy,
 Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed—
 Upon him! and St George to speed!
 If he go down, thou soon shalt know
 Whate'er these airy sprites can show,—
 If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
 I am no warrant for thy life’

- 23 “ ‘Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
 Alone, and armed, forth rode the King
 To that old camp's deserted round
 Sir Knight, you well might mark the mould,
 Left hand the town,—the Pictish race
 The trench, long since, in blood did trace,
 The moon around is brown and bare,

The space within is green and fair
 The spot our village children know,
 For there the earliest wild flowers grow,
 But woe betide the wandering wight
 That treads its circle in the night!
 The breadth across, a bow-shot clear,
 Gives ample space for full career,
 Opposed to the four points of heaven,
 By four deep gaps its entrance given
 The southernmost our monarch passed,
 Halted, and blew a gallant blast,
 And on the north, within the ring,
 Appeared the form of England's king,
 Who then a thousand leagues afar,
 In Palestine waged holy war
 Yet arms like England's did he wield,
 Alike the leopards in the shield,
 Alike his Syrian coursers' flame,
 The rider's length of limb the same
 Long afterwards did Scotland know,
 Fell Edward was her deadliest foe

- 24 "The vision made our monarch start,
 But soon he manned his noble heart,
 And in the first career they ran,
 The Elfin Knight fell horse and man,
 Yet did a splinter of his lance,
 Through Alexander's visor glance,
 And rized the skin—a puny wound
 The king, light leaping to the ground,
 With naked blade his phantom foe
 Compelled the future war to show
 Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
 Where still gigantic bones remain,
 Memorial of the Danish war,
 Himself he saw amid the field
 On high his brandished war axe wield,
 And strike proud Haco from his car,
 While all around the shadowy kings,
 Denmark's grim ravens covered their wings
 'Tis said, that, in that awful night,
 Remoter visions met his sight,
 Foreshowing future conquests far,
 When our sons sons wage northern war,
 A loyal city, tower and spire,
 Reddened the midnight sky with fire,
 And shouting crews her navy bore,
 Triumphant, to the victor shore
 Such signs may learned clerks explain,
 They pass the wit of simple swain
- 25 "The joyful king turned home again,
 Headed his host, and quelled the Dane,

But yearly, when returned the night
 Of his strange combat with the sprite,
 His wound must bleed and smart,
 Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
 'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
 The penance of your start'
 Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
 King Alexander fills his grave,
 Our Lady gave him rest!
 Yet still the nightly spear and shield
 The elfin warrior doth wield,
 Upon the brown hill's breast,
 And many a knight hath proved his chance
 In the charmed ring to break a lance,
 But all have foully sped,
 Save two, as legends tell, and they
 Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay —
 Gentles, my tale is said "

- 26 The quaighs were deep, the liquor strong,
 And on the tale the yeoman throng
 Had made a comment sage and long,
 But Marmion gave a sign,
 And, with their lord, the squires retire,
 The rest, around the hostel fire,
 Then drowsy limbs recline,
 For pillow, underneath each head,
 The quiver and the targe were laid.
 Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
 Oppressed with toil and ale, they snore
 The dying flame, in fitful change,
 Threw on the group its shadows strange
- 27 Apart, and nestling in the hay
 Of a waste loft, Fitz Eustace lay,
 Scarce, by the pale moonlight, were seen
 The foldings of his mantle green
 Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
 Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
 Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,
 Or, lighter yet, of lady's love
 A cautious tread his slumber broke,
 And, close beside him, when he woke,
 In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
 Stood a tall form with nodding plume,
 But, ere his dagger Eustace drew
 His master Marmion's voice he knew
- 28 — "Fitz-Eustace! rise,—I cannot rest,
 Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,
 And graver thoughts have chafed my mood,
 The air must cool my feverish blood,
 And fain would I ride forth, to see
 The scene of elfin chivalry

- Arise, and saddle me my steed,
 And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
 Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves,
 I would not that the prating knaves
 Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
 That I could credit such a tale."
 Then softly down the steps they slid,
 Eustace the stable door undid,
 And, darkling, Marmion's steed arrayed,
 While, whispering, thus the Baron said
- 29 "Didst never, good my youth, hear tell
 That in the hour when I was born,
 St George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
 Down from his steed of marble fell,
 A weary wight forlorn?
 The flattering chaplains all agree,
 The champion left his steed to me
 I would, the omen's truth to show,
 That I could meet this Elfin Foe!
 Blithe would I battle, for the right
 To ask one question at the sprite —
 Vain thought! for elves, if elves there be,
 An empty race, by fount or sea,
 To dashing waters dance and sing,
 Or round the green oak wheel their ring"—
 Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
 And from the hostel slowly rode
- 30 Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
 And marked him pace the village road,
 And listened to his horse's tramp,
 Till, by the lessening sound,
 He judged that of the Pictish camp
 Lord Marmion sought the round
 Wonder it seemed, in the squire's eyes,
 That one, so wary held, and wise,—
 Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received
 For gospel what the church believed,—
 Should, stirred by idle tale,
 Ride forth in silence of the night,
 As hoping half to meet a sprite,
 Arrayed in plate and mail
 For little did Fitz-Eustace know
 That passions, in contending flow,
 Unfix the strongest mind,
 Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
 We welcome fond credulity,
 Guide confident, though blind
- 31 Little for this Fitz Eustace cared,
 But, patient, waited till he heard,
 At distance, pricked to utmost speed,
 The foot-ramp of a flying steed

Come town-ward rushing on
 First, dead, as if on turf it trod,
 Then, clattering on the village road,—
 In other pace than forth he yode,
 Returned Lord Marmion
 Down hastily he sprung from selle,
 And, in his haste, well nigh he fell,
 To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
 And spoke no word as he withdrew,
 But yet the moonlight did betray,
 The falcon crest was soiled with clay,
 And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
 By stains upon the charger's knee,
 And his left side, that on the moor
 He had not kept his footing sure
 Long musing on these wondrous signs,
 At length to rest the squire reclines,
 Broken and short, for still, between,
 Would dreams of terror intervene
 Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
 The first notes of the morning lark

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH

TO JAMES SKENE, ESQ

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

AN ancient Minstrel sagely said,
 "Where is the life which late we led?"
 That motley clown, in Arden wood,
 Whom humorous Jacques with envy viewed,
 Not even that clown could amplify,
 On this trite text, so long as I
 Eleven years we now may tell,
 Since we have known each other well,
 Since, riding side by side, our hand
 First drew the voluntary brand,
 And sure, through many a varied scene,
 Unkindness never came between
 Away these winged years have flown,
 To join the mass of ages gone,
 And though deep marked, like all below,
 With chequered shades of joy and woe,
 Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,
 Marked cities lost, and empires changed,
 While here, at home my narrower den
 Somewhat of manners saw, and men,
 Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears
 Feared the progress of these years,
 Yet now, days, weeks and months, but seem
 The recollection of a dream,
 So still we glide down to the sea
 Of fathomless eternity.

Even now, it scarcely seems a day,
 Since first I tuned this idle lay,
 A task so often thrown aside,
 When leisure graver cares denied,
 That now, November's dreary gale,
 Whose voice inspired my opening tale,
 That same November gale once more
 Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore
 Their veined boughs streaming to the sky,
 Once more our naked birches sigh,
 And Blackhouse heights, and Littrick Pen,
 Have donned their wintry shrouds again,
 And mountain dale, and flooded mead,
 Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed
 Earlier than wont along the sky,
 Mixed with the riel, the snow-mists fly
 The shepherd, who, in summer sun,
 Has something of our envy won,
 As thou with pencil, I with pen,
 The features traced of hill and glen,
 He who, outstretched, the livelong day,
 At ease among the heath-flowers lay,
 Viewed the light clouds with vacant look,
 Or slumbered o'er his tattered book,
 Or idly busied him to guide
 His angle o'er the lessened tide,—
 At midnight now, the snowy plain
 Finds sterner labour for the swain

When red hath set the beamless sun,
 Through heavy vapours dark and dun,
 When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
 Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
 Hurling the hail, and sleeted rain,
 Against the crissement's tinkling pine
 The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox
 To shelter in the brake and rock's,
 Are warnings which the shepherd ask
 To dismal and to dangerous task
 Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
 The blast may sink in mellowing rain,
 Till, dark above, and white below,
 Decided drives the flaky snow,
 And forth the hardy swain must go
 Long, with dejected look and whine,
 To leave the hearth his dogs repine,
 Whistling, and cheering them to aid,
 Around his back he wreathes the plaid
 His flock he gathers, and he guides
 To open downs, and mountain sides,
 Where, fiercest though the tempest blow,
 Least deeply lies the drift below

The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
 Stiffens his locks to icicles,
 Oft he looks back, while, streaming far,
 His cottage window seems a star,—
 Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
 Turns patient to the blast again,
 And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
 Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep
 If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
 Benumbing death is in the gale,
 His paths, his landmarks—all unknown,
 Close to the hut, no more his own,
 Close to the aid he sought in vain,
 The morn may find the stiffen'd swain
 His widow sees, at dawning pile,
 His orphans raise their feeble wail
 And close beside him, in the snow,
 Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe
 Couches upon his master's breast,
 And licks his cheek, to break his rest

Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
 His healthy fare, his rural cot,
 His summer couch by greenwood tree,
 His rustic lark's loud revelry,
 His native hill notes, tuned on high
 To Marion of the blithesome eye,
 His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
 And all Arcadia's golden creed?

Changes not so with us, my Skene
 Of human life the varying scene?
 Our youthful summer oft we see
 Dance by on wings of game and glee,
 While the dark storm reserves its rage
 Against the winter of our age
 As he, the ancient chief of Troy,
 His manhood spent in peace and joy,
 But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,
 Called ancient Priam forth to arms
 Then happy those,—since each must drain
 His share of pleasure, share of pain,—
 Then happy those, beloved of heaven,
 To whom the mingled cup is given,
 Whose lenient sorrows find relief,
 Whose joys are chastened by their grief
 And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
 When thou of late wert doomed to twine,—
 Just when thy bridal hour was by,—
 The cypress with the myrtle tie,
 Just on thy bride her Sue had smiled,
 And blessed the union of his child,
 When love must change its joyous cheer,

And woe affection's filial tear
 Nor did the actions next his end
 Speak more the father than the friend
 Scarce had I lamented Porbe paid
 The tribute to his Minister's shade,
 The tale of friendship scarce 'twas told,
 Ere the narrator's heart was cold
 Far my we search before we find
 A heart so manly and so kind
 But not around his honoured urn
 Shall friends alone, and I myself mourn,
 The thousand eyes his cause had dried
 Pour at his name a bitter tide,
 And frequent falls the grateful dew,
 For benefits the world ne'er knew
 If mortal charity dare claim
 The Almighty's attributed name,
 Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
 "The widow's shield, the orphan's stay"
 Nor, though it wake thy sorrow deem
 My verse intrudes on this sad theme,
 For sacred was the pen that wrote —
 "Thy father's friend forget thou not"
 And grateful title may I plead,
 For many a kindly word and deed,
 To bring my tribute to his grave —
 'Tis little—but 'tis all I have

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
 Recalls our summer walks again,
 When doing nought,—and, to speak true,
 Not anxious to find ought to do,—
 The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
 While oft our talk its topic changed,
 And desultory, as our way,
 Ranged unconfined from grave to gay
 Even when it flagged, as oft will chance
 No effort made to break its trance,
 We could right pleasantly pursue
 Our sports in social silence too
 Thou gravely labouring to portray
 The blighted oak's fantastic spray,
 I spelling o'er, with much delight,
 The legend of that antique knight,
 Tirante by name, ycleped the White
 At either's feet a trusty squire,
 Pandour and Camp, with eyes of fire,
 Jealous, each other's motions viewed,
 And scarce suppressed their ancient feud
 The liverock whistled from the cloud,
 The stream was lively, but not loud,
 From the white thorn the May flower she

"By Becket's bones" cried one, "I fear
 That some false Scot has stolen my spear!"
 Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second squire,
 Found his steed wet with sweat and mire,
 Although the rated horse-boy swore
 Last night he dressed him sleek and fair—
 While chafed the impatient squire his trouble,
 Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder,—
 "Help, gentle Blount! help, comrades all!
 Bevis lies dying in his stall
 To Marmion who the plight dare tell
 Of the good steed he loves so well?"
 Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
 The charger panting on his straw,
 Till one, who would seem wise, cried,—
 "What else but evil could betide,
 With that cursed Palmer for our guide?
 Better we had through mire and lurch
 Been lanthorn-led by I rrr Rush!"

- 2 Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guessed,
 Nor wholly understood,
 His comrades' clamorous plaints suppressed
 He knew Lord Marmion's mood
 Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
 And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
 And did his tale display
 Simply, as if he knew of nought
 To cause such disarray
 Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
 Nor marvelled at the wonders told,—
 Passed them as accidents of course,
 And bade his clarions sound to horse
- 3 Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
 Had reckoned with their Scottish host,
 And, as the charge he cast and paid,
 "Ill thou deserv'st thy hire," he said,
 "Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?
 Fairies have ridden him all the night,
 And left him in a foam!"
 I trust, that soon a conjuring band,
 With English cross and blazing brand,
 Shall drive the devils from this land,
 To their infernal home
 For in this haunted den, I trow,
 All night they trampled to and fro
 The hughing host looked on the hue,—
 "Grimercy, gentle southern squire,
 And if thou com'st among the rest,
 With Scottish broad-sword to be blessed
 Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
 And short the pang to undero"—

Each at his trump a banner wore,
 Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore,
 Herald and pursuivants, by name
 Bute, Islay, Marchmont, Rothesay, came,
 In painted tabards, proudly showing
 Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure glowing,
 Attendant on a King-at-arms,
 Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
 That feudal strife had often quelled,
 When wildest its alarms

- 7 He was a man of middle age,
 In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
 As on king's errand come,
 But in the glances of his eye,
 A penetrating, keen, and sly
 Expression found its home,
 The flush of that satiric rage,
 Which, bursting on the early stage,
 Branded the vices of the age,
 And broke the keys of Rome.
 On milk-white palfrey forth he paced,
 His cap of maintenance was graced
 With the proud heiron-plume
 From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast.
 Silk housings swept the ground,
 With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
 Embroidered round and round
 The double treasure might you see,
 First by Achaus borne,
 The thistle, and the fleur de lis,
 And gallant unicorn
 So bright the king's armorial coat,
 That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
 In living colours, blazoned brave,
 The Lion, which his title gave
 A train, which well becomed his state,
 But all unarmed, around him wait.
 Still is thy name in high account,
 And still thy verse has charms,
 Sir David Lindsay of the Mount,
 Lord Lion King-at-arms!

- 8 Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
 Soon as he saw the Lion-King,
 For well the stately Baron knew
 To him such courtesy was due,
 Whom royal James himself had crowned,
 And on his temples placed the round
 Of Scotland's ancient diadem,
 And wet his brow with hallowed wine,
 And on his finger given to shine
 The emblematic gem

Their mutual greeting duly made,
 The Lion thus his message said —
 "Though Scotland's King hath deeply sworn
 Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
 And strictly hath forbid resort
 From Larchfield to his royal court,
 Yet, for he know's Lord Marmion's name,
 And honours much his worldly fame,
 My liege hath deemed it shame, and lack
 Of courtesy, to turn him back,
 And by his order, I, your guide,
 Must belov'ng fit and fair provide,
 Till first, King James meet time to see
 The flower of English chivalry."

- 9 Though only chafed at this delay,
 Lord Marmion bears it as he may
 The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
 Beholding thus his place supplied,
 Sought to take leave in vain
 Strict was the Lion-King's command,
 That none who rode in Marmion's bard
 Should sever from the train
 "England has here a row of spies
 In Lady Heron's witching eyes,"
 To Marchmont thus, apart, he said,
 But for pretext to Marmion made
 The right hand path they now decline,
 And trace again't the stream the Tyne

- 10 At length up that wild dale they wind
 Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the bank;
 For there the Lion's care assigned
 A lodging meet for Marmion's rank
 That castle rises on the steep
 Of the green vale of Tyne,
 And far beneath, where slow they creep
 From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
 Where alders moist and willows weep,
 You hear her streams repine.
 The towers in different ages rose,
 Their various architecture shows
 The builders' various hands,
 A mighty mass, that could oppose,
 When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
 The vengeful Douglas bands

- 11 Crichtoun! though now thy mry court
 But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
 Thy turrets rude, and tottered keep,
 Have been the minstrel's loved resort
 Oft have I traced within thy fort,
 Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
 Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,

1
 So stately, gliding on,
 Seemed to me ne'er did limner part
 So just an image of the Saint,
 Who propped the Virgin in her faint,—
 The loved Apostle John

- 17 "He stepped before the Monarch's chair,
 And stood with rustic plumpness there,
 And little reverence made,
 Nor heed, nor bow, nor bent,
 But on the desk his arm he leant,
 And words like these he said,
 In a low voice,—but never tone
 So thrilled through vein, and nerve, and bone --
 'My mother sent me from afar,
 Sir King, to warn thee not to war,—
 Woe waits on thine array,
 If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
 Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
 James Stuart, doubly warned, beware.
 God keep thee as he may!—
 The wondering Monarch seemed to seek
 For answer, and found none,
 And when he raised his head to speak,
 The monitor was gone
 The Marshal and myself had cast
 To stop him as he outward passed,
 But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,
 He vanished from our eyes,
 Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
 That glances but, and dies"

- 18 While Lindesay told this marvel strange,
 The twilight was so pale
 He marked not Marmion's colour change,
 While listening to the tale

But, after'a suspended pause,
 The Baron spoke — "Of Nature's laws
 So strong I held the force
 That never superhuman cause
 Could e'er controul their course,
 And, three days since, had judged your aim
 Was but to make you guest your game
 But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
 What much has changed my sceptic creed,
 And made me credit aught" — He staid,
 And seemed to wish his words unsaid,
 But, by that strong emotion pressed
 Which prompts us to unload our breast,
 Even when discovery's pain,
 To Lindesay did at length unfold
 The tale his village host had told,
 At Gifford, to his train
 Nought of the Palmer says he there,
 And nought of Constance, or of Clire
 The thoughts, which broke his sleep, he seems
 To mention but as feverish dreams

19 "In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
 My burning limbs, and couched my head,
 Fantastic thoughts returned,
 And, by then wild dominion led,
 My heart within me burned
 So sore was the delusive goad,
 I took my steed, and forth I rode,
 And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
 Soon reached the camp upon the wold
 The southern entrance I passed through,
 And halted, and my bugle blew
 Methought an answer met my ear,—
 Yet was the blast so low and dear,
 So hollow, and so faintly blown,
 It might be echo of my own

20 "Thus judging, for a little space
 I listened, ere I left the place,
 But scarce could trust my eyes,
 Nor yet can think they served me true,
 When sudden in the ring I view,
 In form distinct of shape and hue,
 A mounted champion rise —
 I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
 In single fight, and mixed array,
 And ever, I myself may say,
 Have borne me as a knight,
 But when this unexpected foe
 Seemed strutting from the gulf below,—
 I care not though the truth I show,—
 I trembled with affright,

And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear
I scarce could couch it right.

- 21 "Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course,—my charger fell,—
What could he 'gainst the shock of hell?
I rolled upon the plain
High o'er my head, with threatening hand,
The spectre shook his naked brand,—
Yet did the worst remain,
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening hell itself could blast
Their sight, like what I saw!
Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—
A face could never be mistook!
I knew the stern vindictive look,
And held my breath for awe
I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead —
I well believe the last,
For ne'er, from visor raised, did stare
A human warrior, with a glare
So grimly and so ghast
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade,
But when to good Saint George I prayed
(The first time e'er I asked his aid,)
He plunged it in the sheath,
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seemed to vanish from my sight
The moonbeam drooped, and deepest night
Sunk down upon the heath —
'Twere long to tell what cause I have
To know his face, that met me there,
Called by his hatred from the grave,
To cumber upper air
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy"—

- 22 Marvelled Sir David of the Mount,
Then, learned in story, 'gan recount
Such chance had happened of old,
When once, near Notham, there did fight
A spectre fell, of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And trained him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow
"And such a phantom, too, 'tis said,
With Highland broad-sword, targe, and plaid,
And fingers red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurcus' glade,
Or where the sable pine trees shade

Duk Tomantoul, and Achnaslaid,
 Dromouchty, or Glenmoire
 And yet, whate'er such legends say,
 Of warlike demon, ghost or fay,
 On mountain, moor, or plain,
 Spotless in futh, in bosom bold,
 True son of chivalry should hold
 These midnight terrors vain
 For seldom have such spirits power
 To harm, save in the evil hour
 When guilt we meditate within,
 Or harbour unrepented sin"—
 Lord Marmion turned him half aside,
 And twice to clear his voice he tried,
 Then pressed Sir David's hand,—
 But nought, at length, in answer said,
 And here then further converse stayed,
 Each ordering that his band
 Should bowne them with the rising day,
 To Scotland's camp to take their way,—
 Such was the King's command

- 23 Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
 And I could trace each step they trode,
 Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone
 Lies on the path to me unknown
 Much might it boast of storied lore,
 But, passing such digression o'er,
 Suffice it, that their route was laid
 Across the furzy hills of Brud
 They passed the glen and scanty ill,
 And climbed the opposing bank, until
 They gained the top of Blackford Hill
- 24 Blackford ! on whose uncultured breast,
 Among the bloom, the thorn, and whin,
 A truant boy, I sought the nest,
 Or listed, as I lay at rest,
 While rose, on breezes thin,
 The murmur of the city crowd,
 And, from his steeple jangling loud,
 Saut Giles's mingling din
 Now, from the summit to the plain,
 Waves all the hill with yellow grain,
 And o'er the landscape as I look,
 Nought do I see unchanged remain,
 Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook
 To me they make a heavy morn
 Of early friendships past and gone.
- 25 But different far the change has been,
 Since Marmion, from the crown
 Of Blackford saw that martial scene
 Upon the bent so brown.

- Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
 Spread o'er the Borough-moor below,
 Upland, and dale, and down —
 A thousand did I say? I ween,
 Thousands on thousands there were seen,
 That chequered all the heath between
 The streamlet and the town,
 In crossing ranks extending far,
 Forming a camp irregular,
 Oft giving way, where still there stood
 Some relics of the old oak-wood,
 That darkly huge did intervene,
 And time the glaring white with green:
 In these extended lines there lay
 A martial kingdom's vast array
- 26 For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
 To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
 And from the southern Redswire edge,
 To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge,
 From west to east, from south to north,
 Scotland sent all her warriors forth
 Marmion might hear the mingled hum
 Of myriads up the mountain come,
 The horses' tramp, and tingling clank,
 Where chiefs reviewed their vassal rank,
 And charger's shrilling neigh,
 And see the shifting lines advance,
 While frequent flashed, from shield and lance,
 The sun's reflected ray
- 27 Thin curling in the morning air,
 The wreaths of fuming smoke declare,
 To embers now the brands decayed,
 Where the night-watch their fires had made
 They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
 Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
 And dire artillery's clumsy car,
 By sluggish oxen tugged to war,
 And there were Borthwick's Sisters Seven
 And culverins which France had given
 Ill-omened gift! the guns remain
 The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain
- 28 Nor marked they less, where in the air
 A thousand streamers fluted far,
 Various in shape, device, and hue,
 Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
 Broad, narrow, swallow tailed, and square,
 Scroll, pennon, pencil, bandiol, there
 O'er the pavilions flew
 Highest, and midmost, was descried
 The royal banner, floating wide,
 The staff, a pine-tree strong and straight,

Pitched deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,
Yet bent beneath the standard's weight,
Whene'er the western wind unrolled,
With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,
And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy Lion ramped in gold

- 29 Lord Marmion viewed the landscape bright,
He viewed it with a chief's delight,—
Until within him burned his herit,
And lightning from his eye did part,
As on the battle-day,
Such glance did falcon never dart,
When stooping on his prey
"Oh! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,
Thy King from warfare to dissuade
Were but a vain essay,
For, by Saint George, were that host mine,
Not power infernal, nor divine,
Should once to perice my soul incline,
Till I had dimmed their armour's shine
In glorious battle fray!"—
Answered the bard, of milder mood
"Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere good,
That kings would think withal,
When perice and wealth their land have blessed
'Tis better to sit still at rest
Than rise, perchance to fall"

- 30 Still on the spot Lord Marmion stayed,
For finer scene he ne'er surveyed
When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red,
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder cloud
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy close and high,
Mine own romantic town!
But northward far, with purer blaze,
On Ochil moun'tains fell the rays,
And as each heathy top they kissed
It gleamed a purple amethyst

Under the shores of Tife you saw,
 Here Preston-Bay, and Berwick-Iaw,
 And, broad between them rolled,
 The gallant Firth the eye might note,
 Whose islands on its bosom float,
 Like emeralds chased in gold
 Fitz Eustace' heart felt closely pent,
 As if to give his rapture vent,
 The spur he to his charger lent,
 And raised his bridle-hand,
 And, making demi-volte in air,
 Cried, "Where's the coward that would not dare
 To fight for such a land!"
 The Lindesay smiled his joy to see,
 Nor Marmion's frown repressed his glee

31 Thus while they looked, a flourish proke,
 Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,
 And fife and kettle-drum,
 And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
 And war-pipe with discordant cry,
 And cymbal clattering to the sky,
 Making wild music bold and high,
 Did up the mountain come,
 The whilst the bells, with distant chime,
 Merrily tolled the hour of prime
 And thus the Lindesay spoke —
 "Thus clamour still the war notes when
 The King to mass his way has taken,
 Or to Saint Catherine's of Sienna,
 Or chapel of Saint Rocque
 To you they speak of martial fame,
 But me remind of peaceful game,
 When blither was their cheer,—
 Thrilling in Falkland-woods the war,
 In signal none his steed should spare,
 But strive which foremost might repair
 To the downfall of the deer

32 "Not less," he said,— "when looking forth,
 I view yon Empress of the North
 Sit on her hilly throne
 Her palace's imperial bowers,
 Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
 Her stately halls, and holy towers—
 Nor less," he said, "I mourn,
 To think what woe mischance may bring,
 And how these merry bells may ring
 The death dirge of our gallant King,
 Or, with their larum, call
 The burghers forth to watch and ward,
 'Gainst southern sack and fires to guard
 Dun Edin's leaguered wall —

But not, for my presaging thought,
 Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought !
 Loid Marmion, I say nay —
 God is the guider of the field,
 He breaks the champion's spear and shield,—
 But thou thyself shalt say,
 When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
 That England's dames must weep in bower,
 Her monks the death-mass sing,
 For never saw'st thou such a power
 Led on by such a King”
 And now, down winding to the plain,
 The barriers of the camp they gain,
 And there they made a stay —
 There stays the Minstrel, till he fling
 His hand o'er every Border string,
 And fit his harp the pomp to sing,
 Of Scotland's ancient Court and King,
 In the succeeding lay

INTRODUCTION TO CANIO FIFTH
 TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ

Edinburgh

WHEN dark December glooms the day,
 And takes our autumn joys away,
 When short and scant the sunbeam throws,
 Upon the weary waste of snows,
 A cold and profitless regard,
 Like patron on a needy bard,
 When sylvan occupation's done
 And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
 And hung, in idle trophy, near,
 The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear,
 When wiry terrier, rough and grim
 And greyhound with his length of limb,
 And pointer, now employed no more,
 Cumber our parlour's narrow floor
 When in his stall the impatient steed
 Is long condemned to rest and feed,
 When from our snow-encircled home,
 Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,
 Since path is none, save that to bring
 The needful water from the spring,
 When wrinkled news-page, thrice conned o'er,
 Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
 And darkling politician, crossed,
 Inveighs against the lingering post,
 And answering housewife sore complains
 Of carriers' snow-impeded wains
 When such the country cheer, I come
 Well pleased to seek our city home

For converse, and for book, to change
The Forest's melancholy range,
And welcome, with sense and delight,
The busy day, and sound night

Not here need my deponding rhyme
Lament the ravages of time,
As erst by Newark's seven towers,
And Littril's stripped of fort's bower,
I rue,—Caledonia's Queen is changed,
Since on her dusky summit ranged,
Within its steepy limits pent,
By bulwark, line, and battlement,
And flanking towers, and laky flood,
Guarded and garrisoned she stood,
Denying entrance or resort,
Save at each tall embattled port,
Above whose arch, suspended, hung
Portcullis spiked with iron prong
That long is gone,—but not so long,
Since early closed, and opening late,
Jealous revolved the catted gate,
Whose task from eve to morning tide
A wicket churlishly supplied
Stern then and steel-girt was thy brow,
Dun-Edin! O, how altered now,
When safe amid thy mountain court
Thou sitt'st, like Empress at her sport,
And liberal, unconfined, and free,
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,
For thy dark cloud, with umbered lower,
That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,
Thou gleam'st against the western ray
Ten thousand lines of brighter day

Not she, the championess of old,
In Spenser's magic tale enrolled,—
She for the charmed spear renowned,
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground,—
Not she more changed, when, placed at rest,
What time she was Malbecco's guest,
She gave to flow her maiden vest,
When from the corslet's grasp relieved,
Free to the sight her bosom heaved,
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
Lest hidden by the ventrile,
And down her shoulders graceful rolled
Her locks profuse, of paly gold
They who whilome, in midnight fight,
Had marvelled at her matchless might,
No less her maiden charms approved,
But looking liked, and liking loved
The sight could jealous prongs beguile,

And charm Malbecco's cares awhile,
 And he, the wandering Squire of Dames,
 Forgot his Columbell's claims,
 And passion, eist unknown, could gain
 The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane,
 Nor durst light Pavidel advance,
 Bold as he was, a looser glance,—
 She charmed, at once, and tamed the heart,
 Incomparable Butomarte!

So thou fair City! disarrayed
 Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,
 As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
 Than in that princely of war
 Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
 Strength and security are flown,
 Still, as of yore, Queen of the North!
 Still canst thou send thy children forth
 Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
 Thy bighers rose to man thy wall,
 Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
 Thy dauntless voluntary line,
 For fosse and turret proud to stand,
 Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.
 Thy thousands, truned to martial toil,
 Full red would stain their native soil,
 Ere from thy mural crown there fell
 The slightest knosp, or pinnacle
 And if it come — as come it may,
 Dun-Edin! that eventful day,—
 Renowned for hospitable deed,
 That virtue much with heaven may plead,
 In patriarchal times whose care
 Descending angels deigned to share,
 That claim may wrestle blessings down
 On those who fight for the Good Town,
 Destined in every age to be
 Refuge of injured royalty,
 Since first, when conquering York arose,
 To Henry meek she gave repose,
 Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
 Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw

Truce to these thoughts!—for, as they rise.
 How gladly I avert mine eyes,
 Bodings, of true or false, to change,
 For Fiction's fair romantic range,
 Or for Tradition's dubious light,
 That hovers 'twixt the day and night
 Dazzling alternately and dim,
 Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,
 Knights, squires, and lovely dames to see,
 Creation of my fantasy,

Nor less the dullest theme and fit
 On wings of unexpected wit,
 In letters as in life approved,
 Example honoured, and beloved,—
 Dear Eliza! to the hard import
 A lesson of thy magic art,
 To win it once the hard and heart,—
 At once to charm, instruct, and mend,
 My guide, my pattern, and my friend!

Such minstrel lesson to bestow
 Be long thy pleasing toil,—but, O!
 No more by thy example teach
 What few can practise, all can preach,
 With even patience to endure
 Languing disease, and painful cure,
 And burst affliction's pricks subdued
 By mild and manly fortitude
 Enough, the lesson has been given
 Forbid the repetition, Heaven!

Come, listen, then! for thou hast known
 And loved the Minstrel's varying tone,
 Who, like his Border sires of old,
 Waked a wild measure, rude and bold,
 Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain
 With wonder heard the northern strain

Come, listen!—bold in thy applause,
The Bard shall scorn pedantic laws,
And, as the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and planned,
But yet so glowing and so grand,
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
Field, feast, and combat, to renew,
And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,
And all the pomp of chivalry

CANTO FIFTH

THE COURT

- I THE train has left the hills of Brud;
The barrier guard have open made
(So Lindesay bide) the palisade,
That closed the tented ground.
Their men the warders backward drew,
And carried pikes as they rode through,
Into its ample bound
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
Upon the Southern band to strike,
And envy with their wonder rose,
To see such well-appointed foes,
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
So huge, that many simply thought
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought,
And little deemed their force to feel,
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
When, rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail
- 2 Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
Glance every line and squadron through,
And much he marvelled one small band
Could marshal forth such various band
For men-at-arms were here,
Heavily sheltered in mail and plate,
Like iron towers for strength and weight,
On Flemish steeds of bone and height,
With battle-axe and spear
Young knights and squires, a lighter train,
Practised their chargers on the plain,
By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,
Each warlike feat to show,
To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
And high curvett, that not in vain
The sword-sway might descend anon
On foeman's casque below
He saw the hardy burghers there
March armed, on foot, with faces bare

For visor they wore none,
 Nor waving plume, nor crest of lamb
 But burnished were their corlets bright,
 Their brigantines, and gorgets light,
 Like very silver shone
 Long pikes they had for standing fight,
 Two handed swords they wore,
 And many wielded mace of weight,
 And bucklers bright they bore

- 3 On foot the yeoman too, but dressed
 In his steel jack, a worthy vest,
 With iron quilted well,
 Each at his back, a slender store,
 His forty days' provision bore,
 As feudal statutes tell
 His arms were halbard, axe, or spear,
 A cross-bow there, a hagbut here,
 A dagger-knife and brand —
 Sober he seemed, and sad of cheer,
 As loth to leave his cottage dear,
 And march to foreign strand,
 Or musing, who would guide his steer,
 To till the fallow land
 Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
 Did aught of dastard terror lie, —
 More dreadful far his ire
 Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,
 In eager mood to battle came,
 Their valour like light straw on flame,
 A fierce but fading fire
- 4 Not so the Borderer — bled to war,
 He knew the battle's din afar,
 And joyed to hear it swell
 His peaceful day was slothful ease,
 Nor harp, nor pipe, his ear could please,
 Like the loud slogan yell
 On active steed, with lance and blade,
 The light armed pricker plied his trade, —
 Let nobles fight for fame,
 Let vassals follow where they lead,
 Burghers, to guard their townships, bleed,
 But war's the Borderer's game
 Their gain, then glory, their delight,
 To sleep the day, murder the night,
 O'er mountain, moss, and moor,
 Joyful to fight they took their way,
 Scarce caring who might win the day,
 Their booty was secure.
 These, as Lord Marmion's train passed by,
 Looked on, at first, with careless eye,
 Nor marvelled aught, well taught to know

The form and force of English bow
 But when they saw the lord arrayed
 In splendid arms, and rich brocade,
 Each Borderer to his kinsman said,—
 “Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!
 Canst guess which road they’ll homeward ride?
 O’ could we but, on Border-side,
 By Eusedale glen, or Liddel’s tide,
 Beset a prize so fair!
 That fangless Lion, too, their guide,
 Might chance to lose his glistening hide,
 Brown Maudlin of that doublet pied
 Could make a little rare.”

- 5 Next Marmion marked the Celtic race,
 Of different language, form, and face,
 A various race of man,
 Just then the chiefs their tribes arrayed,
 And wild and garish semblance made,
 The chequered trews, and belted plaid,
 And varying notes the war-pipes brayed
 To every varying clan,
 Wild through their red or sable hair
 Looked out their eyes, with savage stare,
 On Marmion as he passed,
 Their legs, above the knee, were bare,
 Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
 And hardened to the blast,
 Of taller race, the chiefs they own
 Were by the eagle’s plumage known
 The hunted red-deer’s undressed hide
 Their hairy buskins well supplied,
 The graceful bonnet decked their head,
 Back from their shoulders hung the plaid,
 A broad-sword of unwieldly length,
 A dagger, proved for edge and strength,
 A studded targe they wore,
 And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but, O!
 Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,
 To that which England bore
 The Isles-men carried at their backs
 The ancient Danish battle-axe
 They raised a wild and wondering cry,
 As with his guide rode Marmion by
 Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
 The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
 And, with their cries discordant mixed
 Grumbled and yelled the pipes between
- 6 Thus through the Scottish camp they passed,
 And reached the City gate at last
 Where all around, a wakeful guard,
 Armed burghers kept their watch and ward

Well had they cause of jealous fear,
 When lay encamped, in field so near,
 The Borderer and the Mountaineer
 As through the bustling streets they go,
 All was alive with martial show,
 At every turn, with dinning clang,
 The armourer's anvil clashed and rang,
 Or toiled the swarthy smith, to wheel
 The bar that arms the charger's heel,
 Or axe, or falchion, to the side
 Of jarring grindstone was applied
 Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,
 Through street, and lane, and market-place,
 Bore lance, or casque, or sword,
 While burghers, with important face,
 Described each new-come lord,
 Discussed his lineage, told his name,
 His following, and his warlike fame —
 The Lion led to lodging meet,
 Which high o'erlooked the crowded street,
 There must the Baron rest,
 Till past the hour of vesper tide,
 And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—
 Such was the King's behest
 Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns
 A banquet rich, and costly wines,
 To Marmion and his train
 And when the appointed hour succeeds,
 The Baron dons his peerful weeds,
 And following Lindesay as he leads
 The palace-halls they gam

- 7 Old Holy-Rood rung merrily
 That night, with wassel, mirth, and glee,
 King James within her princely bower
 Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
 Summoned to spend the parting hour,
 For he had charged that his array
 Should southward march by break of day
 Well loved that splendid monarch ye
 The banquet and the song,
 By day the tourney, and by night
 The merry dance, traced fast and light,
 The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,
 The revel loud and long
 This feast outshone his banquets past
 It was his blithest—and his last
 The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,
 Cast on the court a dancing ray,
 Here to the harp did minstrels sing,
 There lutes touched a softer string,
 With long-curved cap, and motley vest,

The licensed fool retained his jest,
 He mimic tricks the juggler played
 At dice and draughts the gallants vied.

While some in close recess apart,
 Courted the loves of their heart,
 Nor courted them in vain,
 For often, in the pining hour,
 Victims to love's sorits his power
 O'er cunning and disdain,
 And flimsy is her heart, can view
 To battle march a lover true —
 Can her purchase his lost Eden,
 Nor own her share of pain

- 8 Through this mixed crowd of plea and game,
 The King to meet Lord Marmion came,

While, reverent, all the room
 An easy rest it was, I trow,
 King James's manly form to know,
 Although, his courtesy to show
 He doffed, to Marmion bending low,
 His braided cap and plume
 For royal were his garb and mien,
 His cloth, of crimson velvet piled
 Trimmed with the fur of marten wild,
 His vest, of changeful satin sheen,
 The dazzled eye beguiled,
 His gorgeous collar hang adown,
 Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown
 The thistle brave of old renown,
 His trusty blade, Toledo right,
 Descended from a baldrick bright,
 White were his buskins on the heel
 His spurs inlaid of gold and steel,
 His bonnet, all of crimson fur,
 Was buttoned with a ruby rare
 And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen
 A prince of such a noble mien.

- 9 The monarch's form was middle size,
 For feat of strength, or exercise,

Shaped in proportion fair,
 And hazel was his eagle eye
 And rufurn of the darkest dye
 His short curled beard and hair
 Light was his footstep in the dance,
 And firm his stirrup in the lists,
 And, oh! he had that merry glance
 That seldom lady's heart resists
 Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
 And loved to plead, lament, and sue, —
 Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain!
 For monarchs seldom sigh in vain

I said he joyed in banquet bower;
But, 'mid his mirth, 'twas then France,
How suddenly his cheer would change,

His look o'ercast and lower,
If, in a sudden turn, he felt
The pressure of his iron belt,
That bound his breast in pain again,
In memory of his father slain.

Even so 'twas strange how he came,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er,
Forward he rushed, with dour face,
Into the stream of revelry
Thus, dim seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he hails, half springs aside,
But feels the quickening spur applied,
And, straining on the tightened rein,
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

20 O'er James's heart, the courtiers cry,
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway.

To Scotland's court she came,
To be a hostage for her lord,
Who Cessford's gallant heart had pored,
And with the King to make accord,
Had sent his lovely dame
Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay King allegiance own,
For the fair Queen of France
Sent him a turquois ring, and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance,
And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,
And march three miles on Southern land,
And bid the winners of his band

In English breezes dance
And thus, for France's Queen, he dressed
His manly limbs in mailed vest,
And thus admitted English fur
His inmost counsels still to share,
And thus, for both, he madly planned
The ruin of himself and land!

And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair, nor France's Queen
Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and keen
From Margueret's eyes that fell —
His own Queen Margueret, who in Lithgow's tower,
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

11. The Queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
And weeps the weary day,
The war against her native soil,
Her Monarch's risk in battle broil, —

And in gay Holy-Rood, the while,
 Dame Heron rises with a smile
 Upon the harp to play
 Fan was her rounded arm, as o'er
 The strings her fingers flew,
 And as she touched, and tuned them all,
 Even her bosom's rise and fall
 Was plainer given to view,
 For, all for heat, was laid aside
 Her wimple, and her hood untied
 And first she pitched her voice to sing,
 Then glanced her dark eye on the King,
 And then around the silent ring,
 And laughed, and blushed, and oft did say
 Her pretty oath, by Yea and Nay,
 She could not, would not, durst not play !
 At length, upon the harp, with glee,
 Mingled with arch simplicity,
 A soft, yet lively, air she rung,
 While thus the wily lady sung

LOCHINVAR

LADY HERON'S SONG

12 O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
 Though all the wide Border his steed was the best,
 And save his good broad-sword he weapons had none,
 He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone
 So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
 There never was knight like the young Lochinvar
 He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
 He swam the Eske river where ford there was none,
 But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
 The bride had consented, the gallant came late
 For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar
 So boldly he entered the Netherby hall,
 Among bride's men and kinsmen, and brothers and all
 Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
 (For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
 "O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"
 "I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied,—
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
 And now I am come, with this lost love of mine
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine
 There are muidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
 That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar"
 The bride kissed the goblet, the knight took it up,
 He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup,
 She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh

With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
“Now tierd we a mer-me!” said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace,
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume,
And the bride-maidens whispered, “’twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.”

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall door and the charger stood near,
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung—
“She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and stream,
They’ll have fleet steeds that follow,” quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting mong Gilmies of the Netherby clan,
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran
There was racing, and chacing, on Cinnobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne’er did they see
So durning in love, and so druntless in war,
Have ye e’er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

- 13 The Monarch o’er the sween hung,
And bent the measure as she sung,
And, pressing closer, and more near,
He whispered praises in her ear
In loud applause the courtiers roed,
And ladies winked and spoke aside
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seemed to reign
The pride that claims applauses due,
And of her royal conquest, too,
A real or feigned disdain
Familiar was the look, and told
Marmion and she were friends of old
The King observed then meeting eyes,
With something like dispersed surprise
For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
Even in a word, or smile, or look
Straight took he forth the parchment broad
Which Marmion’s high commission showed
“Our Borders sicked by many a raid,
Our peaceful liege-men robbed,” he said,
“On day of truce our Warden slain,
Stout Burton killed, his vassals ta’en—
Unworthy were we here to reign,
Should these for vengeance cry in vain,
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
Our herald has to Henry borne.”
- 14 He prused, and led where Douglas stood,
And with stern eye the pageant viewed

I mean that Douglas, sixth of you,
 Who coronet of Angus bore,
 And, when his blood and heart were high,
 Did the third James in camp defy,
 And all his minions led to die

On Luder's dierry flat
 Princes and favourites long grew tame,
 And trembled at the homely name

Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat
 The same who left the dusky vale
 Of Hermitage in Liddesdale,

Its dungeons, and its towers,
 Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
 And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,

To fix his princely bowers
 Though now, in age, he had laid down
 His armour for the peaceful gown,

And for a staff his brand,
 Yet often would flash forth the fire
 That could, in youth, a monarch's ire

And minion's pride withstand,
 And e'en that day, at council board,
 Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,

Against the war-lord Angus stood,
 And chafed his royal lord

- 15 His giant-form, like ruined tower,
 Though fallen its muscles' brawny vault,
 Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and grout,

Seemed o'er the grudy scene to loom
 His locks and beard in silver grew,

His eyebrows kept their sable hue
 Near Douglas when the Monarch stood,
 His bitter speech he thus pursued —

“Lord Marmion, since these letters say
 That in the North you needs must stay,

While slightest hopes of peace remain,
 Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,
 To say—Return to Lindisfarne,

Until my herald come again —
 Then rest you in Tantallon Hold,
 Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—
 A chief unlike his sires of old

He wears then motto on his blade,
 Their blazon o'er his towers displayed;
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,

More than to face his country's foes
 And, I bethink me, by Saint Stephen,

But e'en this morn to me was given
 A prize, the first-fruits of the war,
 Ta'en by a galley from Dunbr,

A bevy of the maids of heaven

Under your guard, these holy maids
 Shall safe return to cloister shades,
 And, while they at Tantallon stay,
 Requiem for Cochran's soul may say " "
 And, with the slaughtered favourite's name
 Across the Monarch's brow there came
 A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame

- 16 In answer nought could Angus speak,
 His proud heart swelled well nigh to break:
 He turned aside, and down his cheek
 A burning tear there stole
 His hand the Monarch sudden took,
 That sight his kind heart could not brook
 "Now, by the Bruce's soul,
 Angus, my hasty speech forgive!
 For sure as doth his spirit live,
 As he said of the Douglas old,
 I well may say of you,—
 That never king did subject hold
 In speech more free, in war more bold,
 More tender, and more true
 Forgive me, Douglas, once again"—
 And, while the King his hand did strain,
 The old man's tears fell down like rain
 To seize the moment Marmion tried,
 And whispered to the King aside
 "Oh! let such tears unwonted plead
 For respite short from dubious deed!
 A child will weep a bramble's smart,
 A maid to see her sparrow part,
 A stripling for a woman's heart
 But woe awaits a country, when
 She sees the tears of bearded men
 Then, oh! what omen, dark and high,
 When Douglas wets his manly eye!"—
- 17 Displeased was James, that stranger viewed
 And tempered with his changing mood
 "Laugh those that can, weep those that may,"
 Thus did the fiery Monarch say,
 "Southward I march by break of day,
 And if within Tantallon strong
 The good Lord Marmion tarry long,
 Perchance our meeting next may fall
 At Tamworth, in his castle-hall"—
 The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
 And answered, grave, the royal aunt
 "Much honoured were my humble home,
 If in its hills King James should come,
 But Nottingham has archers good,
 And Yorkshire men are stern of mood,
 Northumbrian pickers wild and rude

On Derby Hills the paths are steep,
 In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep,
 And many a banner will be torn,
 And many a knight to earth be borne,
 And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
 Ere Scotland's King shall cross the Trent
 Yet pause, brave prince, while yet you may"
 The Monarch lightly turned away,
 And to his nobles loud did call—
 "Lords, to the dance,—a hall! a hall!"
 Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
 And led Dame Heiron gallantly,
 And minstrels, at the royal order,
 Rung out—"Blue Bonnets o'er the Border."

- 18 Leave we these revels now, to tell
 What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
 Whose galley, as they sailed again
 To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en
 Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,
 Till James should of their fate decide,
 And soon, by his command
 Were gently summoned to prepare
 To journey under Marmion's care,
 As escort honoured, safe, and fur,
 Again to English land
 The Abbess told her chaplet o'er,
 Nor knew which Saint she should implore,
 For when she thought of Constance, sore
 She feared Lord Marmion's mood
 And judge what Clara must have felt!
 The sword, that hung in Marmion's belt,
 Had drunk De Wilton's blood
 Unwittingly, King James had given,
 As guard to Whitby's shades,
 The man most dreaded under heaven
 By these defenceless maids
 Yet what petition could avail,
 Or who would listen to the tale
 Of woman, prisoner and nun,
 'Mid bustle of a war begun?
 They deemed it hopeless to avoid
 The convoy of their dangerous guide
- 19 Their lodging, so the King assigned,
 To Marmion's, as their guardian, joined,
 And thus it fell that, passing nigh,
 The Palmer caught the Abbess eye,
 Who warned him by a scroll
 She had a secret to reveal,
 That much concerned the Church's weal,
 And health of sinner's soul,
 And, with deep charge of secrecy,

She named a place to meet,
 Within an open balcony,
 That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,
 Above the stately street,
 To which, as common to each home,
 At night they might in secret come

- 20 At night in secret there they came,
 The Palmer and the holy dame
 The moon among the clouds rode high,
 And all the city hum was by
 Upon the street, where late before
 Did din of war and warriors roar,
 You might have heard a pebble fall,
 A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
 An owl flap his boding wing
 On Giles's steeple tall
 The antique buildings, climbing high,
 Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
 Were here wrapt deep in shade
 There on their brows the moonbeam broke
 Through the fume wreaths of silvery smoke,
 And on the casements played
 And other light was none to see,
 Save torches gliding far,
 Before some chieftain of degree,
 Who left the royal revelry
 To bowne him for the war —
 A solemn scene the Abbess chose,
 A solemn hour, her secret to disclose
- 21 "O, holy Palmer!" she began,—
 "For sure he must be sainted man
 Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
 Where the Redeemer's tomb is found,—
 For his dear Church's sake, my tale
 Attend, nor deem of light avail,
 Though I must speak of worldly love,—
 How vain to those who wed above!
 De Wilton and Lord Marmion wooed
 Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood,
 (Idle it were of Whitby's dame,
 To say of that same blood I came,)
 And once, when jealous rage was high,
 Lord Marmion said despitously,
 Wilton was traitor in his heart,
 And had made league with Martin Swait,
 When he came here on Sumner's part,
 And only cowardice did restrain
 His rebel aid on Stokefield's plan,—
 And down he threw his glove—the thing
 Was tried, as wont, before the King,
 Where frankly did De Wilton own

That Swart in Guelders he had known,
 And that between them then there went
 Some scroll of courteous compliment
 For this he to his castle sent,
 But when his messenger returned
 Judge how de Wilton's fury burned!
 For in his packet there were hid
 Letters that claimed disloyal aid,
 And proved King Henry's cause betrayed
 His fame, thus bought, in the field
 He strove to clear, by spear and shield,—
 To clear his fame in vain he strove,
 For wondrous are His ways above!
 Perchance some form was unobserved,
 Perchance in prayer or faith he swerved,
 Else how could guiltless champion quail,
 Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

22. "His squire, who now De Wilton saw
 As recreant doomed to suffer law,
 Repentant, owned in vain
 That, while he had the scrolls in care
 A stranger maiden, passing fair,
 Had drenched him with a beverage rare —
 His words no faith could gain
 With Chivalry he credence won,
 Who, rather than wed Marmion,
 Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
 To give our house her livings fair,
 And die a vestal vot'ress there
 The impulse from the earth was given,
 But bent her to the paths of heaven
 A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
 Ne'er sheltered her in Whitby's shade,
 No, not since Saxon Edelfled,
 Only one trace of earthly strain,
 That for her lover's loss
 She cherishes a sorrow vain,
 And murmurs at the cross —
 And then her heritage,—it goes
 Along the banks of Tame,
 Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
 In meadows rich the heifer lows,
 The falconer, and huntsman, knows
 Its woodlands for the game
 Shown were it to Saint Hilda dear
 And I her humble vot'ress here,
 Should do a deadly sin,
 Her temple spoiled before mine eyes,
 If this false Marmion such a prize
 By my consent should win,
 Yet hath our boisterous Monarch sworn

That Clare shall from our house be torn,
And grievous cause have I to fear,
Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear

- 23 "Now, prisoner, helpless, and betrayed
To evil power, I claim thine aid
By every step that thou hast trod
To holy shrine, and grotto dim,
By every martyr's tortured limb,
By angel, saint, and seraphim,
And by the Church of God!
For mark — When Wilton was betrayed,
And with his square forged letters lured,
She was, alas! — that sinful maid,
By whom the deed was done, —
O! shame and horror to be told, —
She was a perjured nun!
No clerk in all the land, like her,
Traced quaint and varying character
Perchance you may a marvel deem,
That Marmion's prurience
(For such vile thing she was) should scheme
Her lover's nuptial hour,
But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
As privy to his honour's stain,
Illimitable power
For this she secretly retained
Each proof that might the plot reveal,
Instructions with his hand and seal,
And thus Saint Hilda deigned,
Through sinner's perfidy impure,
Her house's glory to secure,
And Clare's immortal weal
- 24 "Twere long, and needless, here to tell
How to my hand these papers fell,
With me they must not stay
Saint Hilda keep her Abbess true!
Who knows what outrage he might do,
While journeying by the way? —
O! blessed Saint, if e'er again
I venture leave thy calm domain,
To travel or by land or main,
Deep penance may I pay! —
Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer
I give this packet to thy care,
For thee to stop they will not dare,
And, O! with cautious speed,
To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
That he may show them to the King
And for thy well earned meed,
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine,
A weekly mass shall still be thine,

While priests can sing and read —
 What ail'st thou?—Speak!"—For as he took
 The charge, a strong emotion shook
 His frame, and, ere reply,
 They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,
 Like distant clurion feebly blown,
 That on the breeze did die,
 And loud the Abbess shrieked in fear,
 "Saint Withold save us!"—What is here!
 Look at yon city cross!
 See on its battled tower appear
 Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear,
 And blazoned banners toss!"—

- 25 Dun-Edin's cross, a pillared stone,
 Rose on a turret octagon,
 (But now is razed that monument,
 Whence royal edict rang,
 And voice of Scotland's law was sent,
 In glorious trumpet clang
 O! be his tomb as lead to lead,
 Upon its dull destroyer's head!"—
 A minstrel's malison is said)
 Then on its battlements they saw
 A vision, passing Nature's law,
 Strange, wild, and dimly seen,
 Figures, that seemed to rise and die,
 Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
 While nought confirmed could ear or eye
 Discern of sound or mien
 Yet darkly did it seem, as there
 Heralds and pursuivants prepare,
 With trumpet sound, and blazon fair,
 A summons to proclaim,
 But indistinct the pageant proud,
 As fancy forms of midnight cloud,
 When flings the moon upon her shroud
 A wavering tinge of flame,
 It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
 From midmost of the spectre crowd,
 This awful summons came —

- 26 "Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
 Whose names I now shall call,
 Scottish, or foreigner, give ear!
 Subjects of him who sent me here,
 At his tribunal to appear,
 I summon one and all
 I cite you by each deadly sin
 That e'er hath soiled your hearts within,
 I cite you by each brutal lust
 That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—
 By wrath, by pride, by fear,

By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,
 By the dark grave, and dying groan !
 When forty days are passed and gone
 I cite you at your Monarch's throne
 To answer and appear "—

Then thundered forth a roll of names
 The first was thine, unhappy James !

Then all thy nobles came,
 Crawford, Glencarn, Montrose, Argyle,
 Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
 Why should I tell their separate style?

Each chief of birth and fame,
 Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,
 Fore doomed to Flodden's carnage pile,

Was cited there by name,
 And Marmion, Lord of Fontenave,
 Of Lutterward and Scrivelbye,
 De Wilton, erst of Aberley
 The self-same thundering voice did say—

But then another spoke
 'Thy fatal summons I deny,
 And thine infernal lord defy,
 Appealing me to Him on High,
 Who burst the sinner's yoke "

At that dread accent, with a scream,
 Parted the pageant like a dream,

The summoner was gone
 Prone on her face the Abbess fell,
 And fast, and fast, her beads did tell,
 Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
 And found her there alone

She marked not, at the scene aghast,
 What time, or how, the Palmer passed

27 Shift we the scene —The camp doth move

Dun-Ldin's streets are empty now,
 Save when, for weal of those they love,
 To pray the prayer, and vow the vow,

The tottering child, the anxious fair,
 The gray-haired sire with pious care,
 To chapels and to shrines repair —

Where is the Palmer now ? and where
 The Abbess, Marmion, and Clare?—
 Bold Douglas ! to Tantallon fair

They journey in thy charge
 Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
 The Palmer still was with the band,
 Angus, like Lindsay, did command

That none should roam at large
 But in that Palmer's altered mien
 A wondrous change might now be seen,
 Freely he spoke of war,

Of marvels wrought by single hand,
 When lifted for a native land,
 And still looked high, as if he planned
 Some desperate deed afar
 His courser would he feed and stroke,
 And, tucking up his sable frocke,
 Would fust his mettle bold provoke,
 Then soothe, or quell his pride
 Old Hubert said, that never one
 He saw, except Lord Marmion,
 A steed so fairly ride

28. Some half-hour's march behind, there came,
 By Eustace governed fan,
 A troop escorting Hilda's Dame,
 With all her nuns, and Clare
 No audience had Lord Marmion sought;
 Ever he feared to aggravate
 Clara de Clare's suspicious hate,
 And safer 'twas, he thought,
 To wait till, from the nuns removed,
 The influence of kinsmen loved,
 And suit by Henry's self approved,
 Her slow consent had wrought
 His was no flickering flame, that dies
 Unless when fanned by looks and sighs,
 And lighted oft at lady's eyes,
 He longed to stretch his wide command
 O'er luckless Clara's ample land
 Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
 Although the pang of humbled pride
 The place of jealousy supplied,
 Yet conquest, by that meanness won
 He almost loathed to think upon,
 Led him, at times, to hate the cause
 Which made him burst through honour's laws
 If e'er he loved, 'twas her alone
 Who died within that vault of stone

- 29 And now, when close at hand they saw
 North-Berwick's town and lofty Law,
 Fitz-Eustace bade them pause a while
 Before a venerable pile,
 Whose turrets viewed, afar,
 The lofty-Bass, the Lambie Isle,
 The ocean's peace or war
 At tolling of a bell, forth came
 The convent's venerable Dame,
 And prayed Saint Hilda's Abbess rest
 With her, a loved and honoured guest,
 Till Douglas should a barge prepare,
 To wait her back to Whitby fair
 Glad was the Abbess, you may guess,

And thanked the Scottish Prioress,
 And tedious were to tell, I ween
 The courteous speech that passed between.
 O'erjoyed the nuns their palfreys here
 But when fair Clara did intend,
 Like them, from horseback to descend,
 Fitz Eustace said,—“I grieve,
 Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
 Such gentle company to part—
 Think not discourtesy,
 But lords' commands must be obeyed,
 And Marmion and the Douglas said
 That you must wend with me
 Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
 Which to the Scottish Earl he showed,
 Commanding that, beneath his care,
 Without delay, you shall repair,
 To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Claire”

- 30 The startled Abbess loud exclaimed,
 But she, at whom the blow was aimed,
 Grew pale as death, and cold as lead,—
 She deemed she heard her death doom read
 “Cheer thee, my child!” the Abbess said,
 “They dare not tear thee from my hand,
 To ride along with armed band”—
 “Nay, holy mother, nay,”
 Fitz-Eustace said, “the lovely Clare
 Will be in Lady Angus' care,
 In Scotland while we stay,
 And, when we move, an easy ride
 Will bring us to the English side,
 Female attendance to provide
 Befitting Gloster's heir,
 Nor thinks, nor dreams, my noble lord,
 By slightest look, or act, or word,
 To harass Lady Clare
 Her faithful guardian he will be,
 Nor sue for slightest courtesy
 That e'en to stranger falls,
 Till he shall place her, safe and free,
 Within her kinsman's halls”—
 He spoke, and blushed with earnest grace,
 His faith was painted on his face,
 And Clare's worst fear relieved
 The Lady Abbess loud exclaimed
 On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,
 Entreated, threatened, grieved,
 To martyr, saint, and prophet prayed,
 Against Lord Marmion inveighed,
 And called the Prioress to aid,
 To curse with candle, bell, and book—

Her head the grave Cistercian shook
 "The Dog's and the King," he said,
 "In their commands will be obeyed,
 Give not, nor dream that harm can fall
 The maiden in Tantallon hall."

- 31 The Abbess, seeing strife was vain,
 Assuaged her wrothed state again,—
 For much of state she had—
 Composed her veil, and raised her head,
 And—"But," in solemn voice she said,
 'Thy master, bold and bad,
 The records of his house tarn o'er,
 And when he shall there written see
 That one of his own ancestry
 Drove the Monks forth of Coventry,
 Bid him his fate explore!
 Praying in pride of earthly trust,
 His charger hurled him to the dust,
 And by a base plebeian thrust,
 He died his hand before
 God judge 'twixt Marmion and me,
 He is a chief of high degree,
 And I a poor recluse,
 Yet oft, in holy writ, we see
 Even such weak minister as me
 May the oppressor bruse
 I or thus, inspired, did Judith slay
 The mighty in his sin,
 And Jael thus and Deborah,"—
 Here hasty Blount broke in
 "Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band;
 St Anton' fire thee' wilt thou stand
 All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
 To hear the Ladye preach?
 By this good light' if thus we stay
 Lord Marmion, for our fond delay,
 Will sharper sermon teach
 Come, don thy cap, and mount thy horse,
 The Dame must patience take perforce"—
- 32 "Submit we then to force," said Clare,
 "But let this barbarous lord despair
 His purposed aim to win,
 Let him take living, land, and life
 But to be Marmion's wedded wife
 In me were deadly sin
 And if it be the king's decree
 That I must find no sanctuary,
 Where even in homicide might come,
 And safely rest his head,
 Though at its open portals stood,
 Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,

The kinsmen of the dead;
 Yet one asylum is my own,
 Against the dreaded hour,
 A low, a silent, and a lone,
 Where kings have little power
 One victim is before me there —
 Mother, your blessing and in prayer
 Remember your unhappy Clare!"
 Loud weeps the Abbess, and bestows
 Kind blessings many & one,
 Weeping and wailing loud arose
 Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
 Of every simple nun
 His eyes the gentle Eustace dimd,
 And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
 Then took the squire her rein,
 And gently led away her steed
 And, by each courteous word and deed,
 To cheer her strove in vain

- 33 But scant three miles the band had rode,
 When o'er a height they passed,
 And, sudden, close before them showed
 His towers, Tantallon vast
 Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
 And held impregnable in war
 On a projecting rock they rose,
 And round three sides the ocean flows,
 The fourth did battled walls enclose,
 And double mound and fosse
 By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
 Through studded gates, an entrance long,
 To the main court they cross
 It was a wide and stately square,
 Around were lodgings, fit and fair,
 And towers of various form,
 Which on the court projected far,
 And broke its lines quadrangular
 Here was square keep, there turret high,
 Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
 Whence oft the Warlder could descry
 The gathering ocean storm
- 34 Here did they rest — The princely earl
 Of Douglas, why should I declare,
 Or say they met reception fair?
 Or why the tidings say,
 Which, varying, to Tantallon came,
 By harrying posts, or fleetest fame,
 With every varying day?
 And, first, they heard King James had won
 Ettall, and Wark, and Ford, and then,
 That Norham castle strong was ta'en

At that sore marvelled Marmion,—
 And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand
 Would soon subdue Northumberland
 But whispered news there came,
 That, while his host inactive lay,
 And melted by degrees away
 King James was dillyng off the day
 With Heron's wily dame—
 Such acts to chronicles I yield,
 Go seek them there, and see
 Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
 And not a history—
 At length, they heard the Scottish host
 On that high ridge had made their post
 Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain,
 And that brave Surrey many a band
 Had gathered in the Southern land,
 And marched into Northumberland,
 And camp at Woolei ta'en
 Marmion, like charger in the stall,
 That hears without the trumpet-call,
 Began to chafe, and swear—
 "A sorry thing to hide my head
 In castle, like a fearful mud,
 When such a field is near!
 Needs must I see this battle-day
 Death to my fame, if such a fray
 Were fought, and Marmion away!
 The Douglas, too, I wot not why,
 Hath 'bated of his courtesy
 No longer in his halls I'll stay"—
 Then bade his band, they should array
 For march against the dawning day

 INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH

TO RICHARD HEPPER, ESQ

Merton House, Christmas

HEAR on more wood!—the wind is chill,
 But let it whistle as it will,
 We'll keep our Christmas merry still
 Each age has deemed the new-born year
 The fittest time for festal cheer
 Even heathen yet, the savage Dane
 At Yul more deep the mead did drain,
 High on the bench his galleys drew,
 And feasted all his pirate crew,
 Then in his low and pine built hall,
 Where shields and axes decked the wall,
 They goiged upon the half-dressed steer,
 Caroused in seas of sable beer,
 While round, in brutal jest, were thrown

The half-grawed rib, and marrow-bone ;
 O! listene I all, in grim delight,
 While scalds yelled out the joys of fight
 Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,
 While wildly loose their red locks fly,
 And dancing round the blazing pile,
 They make such barbarous mirth the while
 As best might to the mind recall
 The boisterous joys of Odin's I all

And well our Christian sires of old
 Loved when the year its course had rolled,
 And brought blithe Christmas back again,
 With all his hospitable train
 Domestic and religious rite
 Gave honour to the holy night
 On Christmas eve the bells were rung,
 On Christmas eve the mass was sung,
 That only night, in all the year,
 Saw the stole'd priest the chalice rear
 The damsel donned her little sheen,
 The hall was dressed with holly green,
 Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
 To gather in the misletoe
 Then opened wide the baron's hall
 To vassal, tenant, serf, and all,
 Power laid his rod of rule aside,
 And Ceremony doffed his pride
 The heir, with roses in his shoes,
 That night might village partner choose ;
 The lord, undiagoning, share
 The vulgar game of "post and pair"
 All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,
 And general voice, the happy night,
 That to the cottage, as the crown,
 Brought tidings of salvation down

The fire, with well dried logs supplied,
 Went roaring up the chimney wide,
 The huge hall-table's oaken face,
 Scrubbed till it shone the day to grace,
 Bore then upon its massive board
 No mark to part the squire and lord
 Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
 By old blue coated serving man,
 Then the grim boar's-head frowned on high
 Crested with bays and rosemary
 Well can the green-garbed ranger tell,
 How, when, and where, the monster fell,
 What dogs before his death he tore,
 And all the bating of the boar
 The wassail round in good brown bowls,
 Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls

There the huge surloin reeked, hard by
 Plum porridge stood, and Christmas pie,
 Nor failed old Scotland to produce,
 At such high-tide her savoury goose
 Then came the merry masquers in,
 And carols roared with blithesome din,
 If unmelodious was the song,
 It was a hearty note, and strong
 Who lists may in their mumming see
 'Traces of ancient mystery,
 White shirts supplied the masquerade,
 And smutted cheeks the visors made,
 But, O! what masquers richly dight
 Can boast of bosoms half so light!
 England was merry England, when
 Old Christmas brought his sports again
 'Twas Christmas bioached the mightiest ale,
 'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale,
 A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
 The poor man's heart through half the year

Still linger in our northern clime,
 Some remnants of the good old time,
 And still, within our valleys here,
 We hold the kindred title dear,
 Even when perchance its far-fetched claim
 To Southron ear sounds empty name,
 For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
 Is warmer than the mountain-stream
 And thus, my Christmas still I hold
 Where my great-grandsire came of old,
 With amber beard, and flaxen hair,
 And reverend apostolic air—
 The feast and holy tide to share,
 And mix sobriety with wine,
 And honest mirth with thoughts divine
 Small thought was his, in after-time
 E'er to be hitched into a rhyme
 The simple sire could only boast
 That he was loyal to his cost,
 The banished rice of kings revered,
 And lost his land,—but kept his beard

In these dear halls, where welcome kind,
 Is with fair liberty combined,
 Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
 And flies constraint the magic wand
 Of the fair dame that rules the land,
 Little we heed the tempest drear,
 While music, mirth, and social cheer,
 Speed on their wings the passing year
 And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,
 When not a leaf is on the bough.

Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
 As loth to leave the sweet domain,
 And holds his mirror to her face,
 And clips her with a close embrace
 Gladly as he, we seek the dome,
 And as reluctant turn us home

How just, that, at this time of glee,
 My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee!
 For many a merry hour we've known,
 And heard the chimes of midnight's tone—
 Cease, then, my friend! a moment cease,
 And leave these classic tomes in peace!
 Of Roman and of Grecian lore,
 Sure mortal brain can hold no more
 These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,
 Were "pretty fellows in their day,"
 But time and tide o'er all prevail—
 On Christmas eve a Christmas tale—
 Of wonder and of war—"Prose! prose!"
 What! leave the lofty Latin strain,
 Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
 To leave the clash of rusty arms,
 In Fairy Land or Limbo lost,
 To jostle conjurer and ghost,
 Goblin and witch!—Nay, Heber, dear,
 Before you touch my charter, hear
 Though Leyden aids, alas! no more
 My cause with many-tongued lore,
 This may I say—in realms of death
 Ulysses meets Alcides' warrior,
 Aeneas, upon Thracia's shore,
 The ghost of murdered Polydore,
 For omens, we in Livy cross,
 At every turn, *locutus* Bos
 In grave and duly speaks that ox
 As if he told the price of stocks,
 Or held, in Rome republican,
 The place of Common councilman

All nations have their omens drear,
 Their legends wild of woe and fear
 To Cumbria look—the peasant see
 Bethink him of Glendowerdy,
 And shun "the spirit's blasted tree."
 The Highlander, whose red claymore
 The battle turned on Maida's shore,
 Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
 If asked to tell a fairy tale
 He fears the vengeful Elfin King,
 Who leaves that day his grassy ring,
 Invisible to human ken,
 He walks among the sons of men

Didst e'er, dear Heber, pass along
 Beneath the towers of Franchemont,
 Which, like an eagle's nest in an,
 Hang o'er the stream and hamlet fair?—
 Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
 A mighty treasure buried lay,
 Amassed through rapine, and through wrong,
 By the last lord of Franchemont
 The iron chest is bolted hard,
 A Huntsman sits, its constant guard;
 Around his neck his horn is hung,
 His hanger in his belt is slung,
 Before his feet his bloodhounds lie
 An 'twere not for his gloomy eye,
 Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
 As true a huntsman doth he look
 As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
 Or ever hallooed to a hound
 To chase the fiend, and win the prize,
 In that same dungeon ever tries
 An aged Necromantic Priest,
 It is an hundred years at least
 Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,
 And neither yet has lost or won
 And oft the Conjuror's words will make
 The stubborn Demon groan and quake;
 And oft the bands of iron break,
 Or bursts one lock, that still amain,
 Fast as 'tis opened, shuts again
 That magic strife within the tomb
 May last until the day of doom,
 Unless the Adept shall learn to tell
 The very word that clenched the spell,
 When Franch'mont locked the treasure cell
 An hundred years are past and gone,
 And scarce three letters has he won

Such general superstition may
 Excuse for old Pitscottie say,
 Whose gossip history has given
 My song the messenger from heaven,
 That warned, in Lithgow, Scotland's King,
 Nor less the infernal summoning,
 May pass the monk of Durham's tale,
 Whose Demon fought in Gothic mail,
 May pardon plead for Fordun grave,
 Who told of Gifford's Goblin-Cave
 But why such instances to you,
 Who, in an instant, can review
 Your treasured hoards of various lore,
 And furnish twenty thousand more?
 Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest

Like treasure in the Franch'mont chest,
 While grapple owners still refuse
 To others what they cannot use,
 Give them the priest's whole century,
 They shall not spell you letters three,
 Their pleasure in the book's the same
 The magpie takes in pilfered gem
 Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
 Delight, amusement, science, art,
 To every ear and eye impart,
 Yet who, of all who thus employ them,
 Can, like the owner's self, enjoy them?—
 But, hark! I hear the distant drum
 The day of Flodden Field is come—
 Adieu, dear Heber! life and health,
 And store of literary wealth

CANTO SIXTH

THE BATTLE

- 1 WHILE great events were on the gale,
 And each hour brought a varying tale,
 And the demeanour, changed and cold,
 Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold,
 And like the impatient steed of war,
 He snuffed the battle from afar,
 And hopes were none, that back again,
 Herald should come from Terouenne,
 Where England's King in leaguer lay,
 Before decisive battle day,—
 While these things were, the mournful Clare
 Did in the Dame's devotions share
 For the good Countess ceaseless prayed,
 To Heaven and Saints, her sons to aid,
 And, with short interval, did pass
 From prayer to book, from book to mass,
 And all in high baronial pride,
 A life both dull and dignified,—
 Yet as Lord Marmion nothing pressed
 Upon her intervals of rest,
 Dejected Clara well could bear
 The formal state, the lengthened prayer,
 Though dearest to her wounded heart
 The hours that she might spend apart
- 2 I said, Tintallon's dizzy steep
 Hung o'er the margin of the deep
 Many a rude tower and rampart there
 Repelled the insult of the air,
 Which, when the tempest vexed the sky,
 Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by
 Above the rest, a turret square
 Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,

Of sculpture rude, a stony shield,
 The Bloody Heart was in the field,
 And in the chief three mullets stood,
 The cognizance of Douglas blood
 The turret held a narrow stair,
 Which, mounted, gave you access where
 A parapet's embattled row
 Did serward round the castle go,
 Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
 Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
 Sometimes in platform broad extending,
 Its varying circle did combine
 Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
 And bastion, tower, and vantage coign;
 Above the booming ocean leant
 The far-projecting battlement,
 The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
 Upon the precipice below
 Where'er Fantallon faced the land,
 Gate-works, and walls, were strongly manned,
 No need upon the sea-girt side,
 The steepy rock, and frantic tide,
 Approach of human step denied,
 And thus these lines, and ramparts rude,
 Were left in deepest solitude

- 3 And, for they were so lonely, Clare
 Would to these battlements repair,
 And muse upon her sorrows there,
 And list the sea-bird's cry,
 Or slow, like noon-tide ghost, would glide
 Along the dark-gray bulwarks' side,
 And ever on the heaving tide
 Look down with weary eye
 Oft did the cliff, and swelling main,
 Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
 A home she ne'er might see again,
 For she had laid adown,—
 So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
 And frontlet of the cloister pale,
 And Benedictine gown
 It were unseemly sight, he said,
 A novice out of convent shade —
 Now her bright locks, with sunny glow
 Again adorned her brow of snow,
 Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
 A deep and fretted broidery bound,
 In golden foldings sought the ground,
 Of holy ornament, alone
 Remained a cross with ruby stone,
 And often did she look
 On that which in her hand she bore

With velvet bound, and brodered o'er,

Her brevier's book

In such a place, so lone, so grim,

At dawning pale, or twilight dim,

It fearful would have been

To meet a form so richly dressed,

With book in hand, and cross on breast,

And such a woeful mien

Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,

To practise on the gull and crow,

Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,

And did by Mary swear,—

Some love-lorn Fay she might have been,

Or, in romance, some spell-bound queen,

For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen

A form so witching fair

- 4 Once walking thus, at evening tide,
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And, sighing, thought—"The Abbess there,
Perchance, does to her home repair,
Her peaceful rule, where Duty, free,
Walks hand in hand with Charity,
Where oft Devotion's tianced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision, and deep mystery,
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer
O' wherefore to my duller eye,
Did still the Sunn her form deny?
Was it that, seared by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn?
Or lie my warm affections low,
With him that taught them first to glow?
Yet, gentle Abbess, well I knew
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command
That ruled thy simple maiden band—
How different now ' condemned to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride—
But Marmion has to learn, ere long
That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
Descended to a feeble girl,
From Red De Clure, stout Gloster's Earl
Of such a stem, a sapling weak
He ne'er shall bend, although he break

- 5 "But see!—what makes this armour here?"

For in her path there lay

Targe, corslet, helm,—she viewed them near—

"The breastplate pierced!—Ay, much I fear,

Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
That hath made fatal entrance here,

As these dark blood-gouts say —
Thus Wilton! — Oh! not corslet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard,

On yon disastrous day!"

She raised her eyes in mournful mood, —
WILTON himself before her stood!

It might have seemed his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost,
And joy unwonted, and surprise,
Gave their strange wildness to his eyes —
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?

Far less can my weak line declare

Each changing passion's shade,
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy, with her angelic air,
And hope, that paints the future fun,

Their varying hues displayed
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
And mighty Love retuns the field
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delayed,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply

DE WILTON'S HISTORY

- 6 "Forget we that disastrous day,
When senseless in the lists I lay
Thence dragged, — but how I cannot know,
For sense and recollection fled, —
I found me on a pallet low,
Within my ancient beadsman's shed
Austin, — remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush when the old man,
When first our infant love began,
Said we would make a matchless pair —
Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed —
He only held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day,
While wounds and fever held their sway.
But far more needful was his care,

When sense returned to wake despair ;
 For I did tear the closing wound,
 And dash me frantic on the ground,
 If e'er I heard the name of Clare
 At length, to calmer reason brought,
 Much by his kind attendance wrought,
 With him I left my native strand,
 And, in a Palmer's weeds arrayed,
 My hated name and form to shade,
 I journeyed many a land,
 No more a lord of rank and birth,
 But mingled with the dregs of earth
 Oft Austin for my reason feared,
 When I would sit, and deeply brood
 On dark revenge and deeds of blood,
 Or wild mad schemes upreared
 My friend at length fell sick, and said,
 God would remove him soon,
 And while upon his dying bed,
He begged of me a boon—
 If e'er my deadliest enemy
 Beneath my brand should conquered lie,
 Even then my mercy should awake,
 And spare his life for Austin's sake

- 7 "Still restless as a second Cun,
 To Scotland next my route was ta'en
 Full well the paths I knew,
 Fame of my fate made various sound,
 That death in pilgrimage I found,
 That I had perished of my wound,—
 None cared which tale was true
 And living eye could never guess
 De Wilton in his Palmer's dress,
 For now that sable slough is shed,
 And trimmed my shaggy beard and head,
 I scarcely know me in the glass
 A chance most wondrous did provide
 That I should be that Baron's guide—
 I will not name his name—
 Vengeance to God alone belongs,
 But, when I think on all my wrongs,
 My blood is liquid flame!
 And ne'er the time shall I forget,
 When, in a Scottish hostel set,
 Dark loots we did exchange
 What were his thoughts I cannot tell,
 But in my bosom mustered Hell
 Its plans of dark revenge
- 8 "A word of vulgar augury,
 That bro't from me, I scarce knew why,
 Brought on a village tale,

Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
 And sent him armed forth by night
 I borrowed steed and mail,
 And weapons, rom his sleeping band ;
 And, passing from a postern door,
 We met, and 'countered, hand to hand,—
 He fell on Gifford-moor
 For the death-stroke my brand I drew,
 (O then my helmed head he knew,
 The Palmer's cowl was gone,)
 Then had three inches of my blade
 The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—
 My hand the thought of Austin stayed ,
 I left him there alone —
 O good old man ! even from the grave,
 Thy spirit could thy master save
 If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
 Had Whitby's Abbess, in her fear,
 Given to my hand this packet dear,
 Of power to clear my injured fame,
 And vindicate De Wilton's name —
 Perchance you heard the Abbess tell
 Of the strange pagcantry of Hell,
 That broke our secret speech—
 It rose from the infernal shade,
 Or featly was some juggle played,
 A tale of peace to teach
 Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,
 When my name came among the rest

- 9 "Now here, within Tantallon Hold,
 To Douglas late my tale I told,
 To whom my house was known of old
 Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
 This eve anew shall dub me knight
 These were the arms that once did turn
 The tide of fight on Otterburne,
 And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,
 When the Dead Douglas won the field
 These Angus gave—his armourer's care,
 Ere morn, shall every breach repair,
 For nought, he said, was in his halls,
 But ancient armour on the walls,
 And aged chargers in the stalls,
 And women, priests, and gray-haired men
 The rest were all in Twisel-glen
 And now I watch my armour here,
 By law of arms, till midnight's near,
 Then, once again a belted knight,
 Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light

- 10 "There soon again we meet, my Clare !
 This Baron means to guide thee there.

Douglas revere his king's command,
 Else would he take thee from his band
 And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,
 Will give De Wilton justice due
 Now meeter far for martial broil,
 Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,
 Once more' — "O, Wilton! must we then
 Risk new-found happiness again,
 Trust fate of arms once more?
 And is there not a humble glen,
 Where we, content and poor,
 Might build a cottage in the shade,
 A shepherd thou, and I to aid
 Thy task on dale and moor?—
 That reddening brow!—too well I know
 Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,
 While falsehood stains thy name
 Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go!
 Clare can a warrior's feelings know,
 And weep a warrior's shame,
 Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
 Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,
 And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
 And send thee forth to fame!"

- II. That night, upon the rocks and bay,
 The midnight moonbeam slumbering lay,
 And poured its silver light, and pure,
 Through loop-hole, and through embrasure,
 Upon Tantallon tower and hall,
 But chief where arched windows wide
 Illuminate the chapel's pride,
 The sober glances fall
 Much was their need, though, seamed with scars,
 Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
 Though two gray priests were there,
 And each a blazing torch held high,
 You could not by their blaze descry
 The chapel's carving fair
 Amid that dim and smoky light,
 Chequering the silvery moonshine bright,
 A bishop by the altar stood,
 A noble lord of Douglas blood,
 With mitre sheen, and rochet white,
 Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
 But little pride of prelacy
 More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
 He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
 Than that beneath his rule he held
 The bishopric of far Dunkeld
 Beside him ancient Angus stood,
 Doffed his furred gown, and sable hood,

- O'er his huge form, and visage pale,
 He wore a cap and shirt of mail
 And leaned his large and wrinkled hand
 Upon the huge and sweeping brand,
 Which wont, of yore in battle-fray,
 His foeman's limbs to shred away,
 As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.
 He seemed as, from the tombs around
 Rising at judgment-day,
 Some giant Douglas may be found
 In all his old array,
 So pale his face, so huge his limb,
 So old his arms, his look so grim
- 12 Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
 And Clare the spurs bound on his heels;
 And think what next he must have felt
 At buckling of the falchion belt,
 And judge how Clara changed her hue.
 While fastening to her lover's side
 A friend, which, though in danger tried,
 He once had found untrue!
 Then Douglas struck him with his blade
 "Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,
 I dub thee knight
 Arise Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir!
 For king, for church, for lady fair,
 See that thou fight."—
 And Bishop Gwyn as he rose,
 Said,—“Wilton! grieve not for thy woes,
 Disgrace, and trouble,
 For He, who honour best bestows
 May give thee double”—
 De Wilton sobbed, for sob he must—
 “Where'er I meet a Douglas trust
 That Douglas is my brother!”—
 “Nay, nay,” old Angus said, “not so;
 To Surrey's camp thou now must go,
 Thy wrongs no longer smother
 I have two sons in yonder field,
 And, if thou meet'st them under shield,
 Upon them bravely—do thy worst,
 And foul fall him that blanches first!”
- 13 Not far advanced was morning day,
 When Marmion did his troop array
 To Surrey's camp to ride,
 He had safe conduct for his band.
 Beneath the roval seal and hand,
 And Douglas gave a guide
 The ancient Earl, with stately grace,
 Would Clara on her palfrey place,
 And whispered, in an under-tone,

'Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown"
 The train from out the castle drew,
 But Marmion stopped to bid adieu—
 Though something I might plan," he said,
 "Of cold respect to stranger guest,
 Sent hither by your king's behest,
 While in Tantallon's towers I stayed,
 Part we in friendship from your land,
 And, noble Earl, receive my hand"—
 But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
 Folded his arms and thus he spoke—
 "My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
 Be open, at my sovereign's will,
 To each one whom he lists, how'er
 Unmeet to be the owner's peer
 My castles are my king's alone,
 From turret to foundation stone—
 The hand of Douglas is his own,
 And never shall in friendly grasp
 The hand of such as Marmion clasp"

- 14 Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
 And shook his very frame for ire,
 And—"This to me!" he said,—
 "An 'twere not for thy horry beard,
 Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
 To cleave the Douglas' head"
 And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,
 He, who does England's message here,
 Although the meanest in her state,
 May well, proud Angus, be thy mate
 And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
 Even in thy pitch of pride,
 Here in thy Hold, thy vassals near,
 (Nay, never look upon your lord,
 And lay your hands upon your sword,)
 I tell thee, thou'rt defied,
 And if thou saidst, I am not peer
 To any lord in Scotland here,
 Lowland or Highland, far or near,
 Lord Angus, thou hast lied!"—
 On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage
 O'ercame the ashen hue of age
 Fierce he broke forth—"And darest thou then
 To beard the lion in his den,
 The Douglas in his hall?
 And hopest thou hence unscathed to go?—
 No, by Saint Bryde of Bothwell, no!"—
 Up drawbridge, grooms—what, Warder, ho!
 Let the portcullis fall"—
 Lord Marmion turned,—well was his need,
 And dashed the rowels in his steed,

Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous gate behind him rung
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume

- 15 The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise,
Not lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim
And when Lord Marmion reached his band,
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers
"Horse! horse!" the Douglas cried, "and chase!"
But soon he reined his fury's pace
"A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name —
A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed!
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the King praised his clerkly skill
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line.
So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill —
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood
I thought to slay him where he stood —
'Tis pity of him, too," he cried,
"Bold can he speak, and fairly ride.
I warrant him a warrior tried" —
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle halls

- 16 The day in Marmion's journey wore,
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They crossed the heights of Stanrigg-moor
His troop more closely there he scanned,
And missed the Palmer from the band —
"Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
"He parted at the peep of day,
Good sooth, it was in strange array"
"In what array?" said Marmion, quick
"My lord, I ill can spell the trick,
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang,
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And from a loophole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,
Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air,
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,

By Archibald von a bloody war,
 Against the Saracen and Earl
 Last night it hung not in the hall;
 I thought some marvel would befall
 And next I saw the Earl's beauteous
 Old Cheviot forth, though something old,
 A matchless horse, though something old,
 Prompt to his price—cool and bold
 I heard the Sheriff Sholto say,
 The Earl did much the Master pray
 To use him on the battle day,
 But he preferred—"Nay, Henry, cease!"
 Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace—
 Eustace, thou bearest a braver prey,
 What did Bloant see at break of day?"—

- 17 "In brief, my lord, we both deserted
 (For I then stood by Henry's side)
 The Palmer mount and outwards ride,
 Upon the Earl's own favourite steed;
 All sheathed he was in armour bright
 And much resembled that same knight
 Subdued by you in Cotswold fight,
 Lord Angus wished him speed!
 The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
 A sudden light on Marmion broke—
 "Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"
 He muttered—"I was not fry nor ghost
 I met upon the moonlight wold,
 But living man of earthly mould—
 O dotage blind and gross!
 Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
 Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
 My path no more to cross—
 How stand we now?—he told his tale
 To Douglas, and with some avail;
 'Twas therefore gloomed his rugged brow—
 Will Surrey dare to entertain,
 'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
 Small risk of that, I trow—
 Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun,
 Must separate Constance from the Nun—
 O what a tangled web we weave,
 When first we practise to deceive!"
 A Palmer too!—no wonder why
 I felt rebuked beneath his eye
 I might have known there was but one
 Whose look could quell Lord Marmion!"—
- 18 Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
 His troop, and reached, at eve, the Tweed,
 Where Lennel's convent closed their march,
 (There now is left but one frail arch,

Yet mourn thou not its cells,
 Our time a fair exchange has made,
 Hard by, in hospitable shade,
 A reverend pilgrim dwells,
 Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
 That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood;
 Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there
 Give Marmion entertainment fair,
 And lodging for his train, and Clare
 Next morn the Baron climbed the tower,
 To view afar the Scottish power,
 Encamped on Flodden edge
 The white pavilions made a show,
 Like remnants of the winter snow
 Along the dusky ridge
 Long Marmion looked — at length his eye
 Unusual movement might descry,
 Amid the shifting lines
 The Scottish host drawn out appears,
 For, flashing on the edge of spears
 The eastern sunbeam shines
 Their front now deepening, now extending,
 Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
 Now drawing back, and now descending,
 The skilful Marmion well could know,
 They watched the motions of some foe,
 Who traversed on the plain below

- 19 E'en so it was — from Flodden ridge
 The Scots beheld the English host
 Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
 And heedful watched them as they crossed
 The Till by Twisel-bridge
 High sight it is, and haughty, while
 They dive into the deep defile,
 Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,
 Beneath the castle's airy wall
 By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
 Troop after troop are disappearing,
 Troop after troop their banners rearing
 Upon the eastern bank you see
 Still pouring down the rocky den,
 Where flows the sullen Till,
 And rising from the dim-wood glen,
 Standards on standards, men on men,
 In slow succession still,
 And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
 And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
 To gain the opposing hill
 That morn to many a trumpet-clang,
 Twisel ! thy rocks deep echo rang,
 And many a chief of birth and rank

Sunt Helen! at thy fountain drain
 Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
 In spring tide bloom so lavishly,
 Had then from many an axe its doom,
 To give the marching columns room

- 20 And why stands Scotland idly now,
 Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
 Since England gains the pass the while,
 And struggles through the deep defile?
 What checks the fiery soul of James?
 Why sits that champion of the dames
 Inactive on his steed,
 And sees, between him and his land,
 Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
 His host Lord Surrey lead?
 What avails the vain knight-errant's brand?—
 O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
 Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
 O for one hour of Wallace wight,
 Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight,
 And cry—"Sunt Andrew and our right!"
 Another sight had seen that morn,
 From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
 And Flodden had been Bannock-bourne!—
 The precious hour has passed in vain,
 And England's host has gained the plain,
 Wheeling their march, and circling still,
 Around the base of Flodden-hill
- 21 Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
 Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,—
 "Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!"
 And see ascending squadrons come
 Between Tweed's river and the hill,
 Foot, horse, and cannon—hap what hap,
 My busnet to a 'prentice cap,
 Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!—
 Yet more! yet more!—how fair arrayed
 They file from out the hawthorn shade,
 And sweep so gallant by!
 With all their banners bravely spread,
 And all their armour flashing high,
 Saint George might waken from the dead,
 To see fair England's standards fly!—
 "Stunt in thy prate," quoth Blount, "thou'dst best,—
 And listen to our lord's behest!"—
 With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,—
 "This instant be our band arrayed,
 The river must be quickly crossed,
 That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
 If fight King James,—as well I trust
 That fight he will, and fight he must,—

The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins"—

- 22 Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And muttered, as the flood they view,
"The pheasant in the falcon's claw
He scarce will yield to please a daw,
Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me"
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Lert's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately,
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride;
Herdmoot of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven perforce,
The southern bank they gain,
Behind them, straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain,
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharmed, should sharply ring
A moment then Lord Marmion stayed,
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,
Then forward moved his band
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a cross of stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command
- 23 Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray,
Their marshalled lines stretched east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation passed
From the loud cannon mouth,
Not in the close successive rattle
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between—
The hillock gained, Lord Marmion stayed
"Here, by this cross," he gently said,
"You well may view the scene
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare
O! think of Marmion in thy prayer!"

Thou wilt not?—well,—no less my care
 Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare —
 You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
 With ten picked archers of my train,
 With England if the day go hard,
 To Berwick speed remain —

But, if we conquer, cruel maid!
 My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
 When here we meet again "—
 He waited not for answer there,
 And would not mark the maid's despair,
 Nor heed the discontented look
 From either squire, but spurred amain,
 And, dashing through the battle plain,
 His way to Surrey took

- 24 "—The good Lord Marmion, by my life!
 Welcome to danger's hour!—
 Short greeting serves in time of strife —
 Thus have I ranged my power
 Myself will rule this central host,
 Stout Stanley fronts their right,
 My sons command the vaward post,
 With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;
 Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
 Shall be in rearward of the fight,
 And succour those that need it most
 Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
 Would gladly to the vanguard go
 Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
 With thee their charge will blithely share;
 There fight thine own retainers too,
 Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."—
 "Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said.
 Nor further greeting there he paid,
 But, parting like a thunderbolt,
 First in the vanguard made a halt,
 Where such a shout there rose
 Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry,
 Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
 Startled the Scottish foes

- 25 Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
 With Lady Clare upon the hill,
 On which (for far the day was spent)
 The western sunbeams now were bent.
 The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
 Could plain their distant comrades view
 Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
 "Unworthy office here to stay!
 No hope of gilded spurs to day —
 But, see! look up—on Flodden bent,
 The Scottish foe has fired his tent"—

And sudden, as he spoke,
 From the sharp ridges of the hill,
 All downward to the banks of Till,
 Was wreathed in sable smoke,
 Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
 The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
 As down the hill they broke,
 Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
 Announced their march, their tread alone,
 At times one warning trumpet blown,
 At times a stifled hum,
 Told England, from his mountain-throne
 King James did rushing come —
 Scarce could they hear or see their foes,
 Until at weapon-point they close —
 They close, in clouds of smoke and dust
 With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust,
 And such a yell was there,
 Of sudden and portentous birth,
 As if men fought upon the earth,
 And fiends in upper air
 Long looked the anxious squires, their eye
 Could in the darkness nought descry

- 26 At length the freshening western blast
 Aside the shroud of battle cast,
 And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
 Above the brightening cloud appears,
 And in the smoke the pennons flew,
 As in the storm the white sea mew
 Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
 The broken billows of the war,
 And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
 Floating like foam upon the wave,
 But nought distinct they see
 Wide raged the battle on the plain,
 Spears shook, and falchions flashed amain,
 Fell England's arrow-flight like rain,
 Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,
 Wild and disorderly
 Amid the scene of tumult, high
 They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly
 And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
 And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
 Still bear them bravely in the fight,
 Although against them come
 Of gallant Gordons many a one,
 And many a stubborn Highlandman,
 And many a rugged Border clan,
 With Huntley, and with Home

- 27 Far on the left, unseen the while,
 Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;

Though there the western mountaineer
 Rushed with bue bosom on the spear,
 And flung the feeble targe aside,
 And with both hands the brodsword plied.
 Twas vain — But Fortune, on the right,
 With fickle smile, cheered Scotland's fight
 Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell,
 Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
 With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
 Around the battle yell
 The Border slogan rent the sky
 A Home! a Gordon! was the cry,
 Loud were the clanging blows,
 Advanced, — forced back, — now low, now high,
 The pennon sunk and rose,
 As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
 When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
 It waved 'mid the foes
 No longer Blount the view could bear —
 "By heaven, and all its saints! I swear,
 I will not see it lost!"

Fitz Eustace, you with Lady Clare
 May bid your beads, and pitter prayer, —
 I gallop to the host!"

And to the fray he rode amain,
 Followed by all the archer train
 The fiery youth, with desperate charge
 Made, for a space, an opening large, —
 The rescued banner rose, —
 But darkly closed the war around,
 Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground
 It sunk among the foes

Then Eustace mounted too, — yet stayed,
 As loath to leave the helpless maid,
 When, fast as shaft can fly,

Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
 The loose rein dangling from his head,
 Housing and saddle bloody red,

Lord Marmion's steed rushed by,
 And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
 A look and sign to Clara cast,

To mark he would return in haste,
 Then plunged into the fight

- 28 Ask me not what the maiden feels,
 Left in that dreadful hour alone
 Perchance her reason stoops, or reels,
 Perchance a courage, not her own,
 Drives her mind to desperate tone —
 The rattled van of England wheels, —
 She only, laid, is loud in air

The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there?"
 They fly, or maddened by despair,
 Fight but to die.—"Is Wilton there?"
 With that, straight up the hill there rode
 Two horsemen drenched with gore,
 And in their arms, a helpless load,
 A wounded knight they bore
 His hand still strained the broken brand,
 His arms were smeared with blood and sand,
 Dragged from among the horses' feet,
 With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
 The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
 Can that be haughty Marmion?
 Young Blount his armour did unlace,
 And, gazing on his ghastly face,
 Said,—"By Saint George, he's gone!
 That spear-wound has our master sped,
 And see the deep cut on his head!"

Good night to Marmion!"—

"Unnurtured Blount!—thy brawling cease.
 He opes his eyes," said Eustace, "peace!"—

- 29 When doffed his casque, he felt free air,
 Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare —
 Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
 Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
 Redeem my pennon,—charge again,
 Cry—"Marmion to the rescue!"—Vun!
 Last of my race, on battle-plain
 That shout shall ne'er be heard again!
 Yet my last thought is England's.—fly,
 To Dacre bear my signet-ring;
 Tell him his squadrons up to bring —
 Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie
 Tunstall lies dead upon the field;
 His life-blood stains the spotless shield
 Edmund is down,—my life is left,—
 The Admiral alone is left
 Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
 With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
 Full upon Scotland's central host,
 Or victory and England's lost.—
 Must I bid twice?—hence, virelets! fly!
 Leave Marmion here alone—to die!"—
 They parted and alone he lay,
 Clare drew her from the sight away,
 Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
 And half he murmured,—"Is there none,
 Of all my halls have nursed,
 Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
 Of blessed water from the spring,
 To slake my dying thirst!"—

- 30 O, woman! in our hours of ease,

Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
 And variable as the shade
 By the light quivering aspen made,
 When pain and anguish wing the brow
 A ministering angel thou!—
 Scarce were the piteous accents said,
 When, with the Baron's casque, the maid
 To the high streamlet ran
 Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears,
 The plaintive voice alone she hears,
 Sees but the dying man
 She stooped her by the runnel's side,
 But in abhorrence backward drew,
 For, oozing from the mountain's side,
 Where raged the war, a dark red tide
 Was curling in the streamlet blue
 Where shall she turn!—behold her mark
 A little fountain cell,
 Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
 In a stone basin fell
 Above, some half-worn letters say,
 "Drink weary pilgrim drink and pray
 For the kind soul of Sibyl Gray,
 Who built this cross and well"
 She filled the helm, and back she hied,
 And with surprise and joy espied
 A Monk supporting Marmion's head,
 A pious man, whom duty brought
 To dubious verge of battle fought,
 To shrieve the dying, bless the dead

- 31 Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
 And as she stooped his brow to lave—
 "Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
 "Or injured Constance bathes my head?"
 Then, as remembrance rose—
 "Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
 I must redress her woes
 Short space, few words, are mine to spare,
 Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"
 "Alas!" she said, "the while,—
 O think of your immortal wail!
 In vain for Constance is your zeal,
 She—died at Holy Isle"—
 Lord Marmion started from the ground
 As light as if he felt no wound,
 Though in the action burst the tide
 In torrents from his wounded side
 "Then it was truth!"—he said—"I knew
 That the dark presage must be true—
 I would the fiend, to whom belongs
 The vengeance due to all her wrongs,

Would spare me but a day!
 For wasting fire, and dying groan,
 And priests slum on the altar-stone,
 Might bribe him for delay.
 It may not be!—this dizzy trance—
 Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
 And doubly cursed my failing brand!
 A sinful heart makes feeble hand"—
 Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
 Supported by the trembling Monk

- 32 With fruitless labour, Clara bound
 And strove to staunch the gushing wound
 The Monk, with unavailing cares,
 Exhausted all the Church's prayers,
 Ever, he said, that, close and near,
 A lady's voice was in his ear,
 And that the priest he could not hear,
 For that she ever sung,
*"In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,
 Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!"*
 So the notes rung
 "Avoid thee, Fiend!—with cruel hand,
 Shake not the dying sinner's hand!—
 O look, my son, upon yon sign
 Of the Redeemer's grace divine,
 O think on faith and bliss!—
 By many a death-bed I have been,
 And many a sinner's parting seen,
 But never aught like this"—
 The war, that for a space did fail,
 Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,
 And—STANLEY! was the cry—
 A light on Marmion's visage spread,
 And fired his glazing eye
 With dying hand, above his head
 He shook the fragment of his blade,
 And shouted "Victory!—
 Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"
 Were the last words of Marmion

- 33 By this, though deep the evening fell,
 Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
 For still the Scots, around their king,
 Unbroken, fought in desperate ring
 Where's now their victor vanguard wing,
 Where Huntley, and where Home?—
 O for a blast of that dread horn,
 On Fontarabrin echoes borne,
 That to King Charles did come,
 When Rowland brave, and Oliver,
 And every paladin and peer,
 On Roncesvalles died!

Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
 To quit the plunder of the slain,
 And turn the doubtful day again,
 While yet on Flodden side,
 Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
 And round it toils and bleeds and dies
 Our Caledonian pride!
 In vain the wish—for far away,
 While spoil and havoc mark their way,
 Near Sibyl's Cross the plunderers stry—
 "O Lady," cried the Monk, "away!"
 And placed her on her steed,
 And led her to the chapel fair
 Of Tilmouth upon Tweed
 There all the night they spent in prayer,
 And, at the dawn of morning, there
 She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Claire.

34. But as they left the darkening heath,
 More desperate grew the strife of death
 The English shafts, in volleys hailed,
 In headlong charge their horse assailed
 Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep,
 To break the Scottish circle deep,
 That fought around their king
 But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
 Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
 Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
 Unbroken was the ring,
 The stubborn spearmen still made good
 Their dark impenetrable wood,
 Each stepping where his comrade stood,
 The instant that he fell
 No thought was there of dastard flight,
 Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
 Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
 As fearlessly and well,
 Till utter darkness closed her wing
 O'er their thyn host and wounded king
 Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
 Led back from strife his shattered bands,
 And from the charge they drew,
 As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
 Sweep back to ocean blue
 Then did their loss his foemen know;
 Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,
 They melted from the field as snow,
 When streams are swoln, and south winds blow,
 Dissolves in silent dew
 Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
 While many a broken band,
 Disordered, through her currents dash,

To gain the Scottish land;
 To town and tower to down and dale,
 To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
 And raise the universal wail.
 Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
 Shall many an age that wail prolong.
 Still from the sire the son shall hear
 Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
 Of Flodden's fatal field,
 Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
 And broken was her shield!

- 35 Dry dawns upon the mountain's side:—
 There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
 Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one;
 The sad survivors all are gone—
 View not that corpse mistrustfully
 Defaced and mangled though it be,
 Nor to yon Border castle high
 Look northward with upbraiding eye;
 Nor cherish hope in vain,
 That, journeying far on foreign strand,
 The Royal Pilgrim to his land
 May yet return again
 He saw the wreck his rashness wrought
 Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
 And fell on Flodden plain.
 And well in death his trusty brand
 Firm clerched within his manly hand
 Besetemed the monarch slain
 But, O! how changed since yon little night—
 Gladly I turn me from the sight,
 Unto my tale again

The last Lord Marmion lay not there
 From Ettricke woods, a peasant swain
 Followed his lord to Flodden plain —
 One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
 In Scotland mourns as "wede away"
 Sore wounded, Sibyl's Cross he spied,
 And dragged him to its foot, and died,
 Close by the noble Marmion's side
 The spoilers stripped and gashed the slain,
 And thus their corpses were mista'en,
 And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,
 The lowly woodsman took the room

- 37 Less easy task it were, to show
 Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
 They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
 But every mark is gone,
 Time's wasting hand has done away
 The simple Cross of Sibyl Gray,
 And broke her font of stone
 But yet from out the little hill
 Oozes the slender springlet still
 Oft halts the stranger there,
 For thence may best his curious eye
 The memorable field descry,
 And shepherd boys repair
 To seek the water-flag and rush,
 And rest them by the hazel bush,
 And plait their garlands fair,
 Nor dream they sit upon the grave
 That holds the bones of Marmion brave
 When thou shalt find the little hill,
 With thy heart commune, and be still
 If ever, in temptation strong,
 Thou leftst the right path for the wrong,
 If every devious step, thus trode,
 Still led thee further from the road,
 Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
 On noble Marmion's lowly tomb,
 But say, "He died a gallant knight,
 With sword in hand, for England's right"

- 38 I do not rhyme to that dull elf
 Who cannot image to himself
 That all through Flodden's dismal night
 Wilton was foremost in the fight,
 That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
 'Twas Wilton mounted him again,
 'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hewed,
 Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood
 Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
 He was the living soul of all,
 That, after fight, his faith made plain,

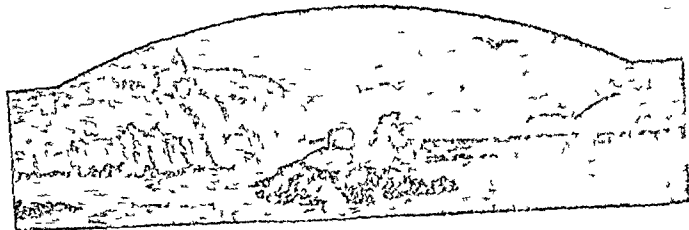
He won his rank and lands again,
 And charged his old paternal shield
 With bearings won on Flodden field —
 Nor sing I to that simple maid
 To whom it must in terms be said
 That king and kinsmen did agree
 To bless fair Clara's constancy,
 Who cannot, unless I relate
 Paint to her mind the bridal's state,
 That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
 More, Sands, and Denny, passed the joke.
 That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
 And Catherine's hand the stocking threw,
 And afterwards, for many a day,
 That it was held enough to say,
 In blessing to a wedded pair,
 "Love they like Wilton and like Clare!"

 L'ENVOY.

TO THE READER

WHY then a final note prolong,
 Or lengthen out a closing song,
 Unless to bid the gentles speed,
 Who long have listened to my rede?—
 To Statesmer give, if such may deign
 To read the Minstrel's idle strain,
 Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
 And patriotic heart—as PITT!
 A garland for the hero's crest,
 And twined by her he loves the best,
 To every lovely lady bright,
 What can I wish but faithful knight?
 To every faithful lover too,
 What can I wish but lady true?
 And knowledge to the studious sage,
 And pillow soft to head of age
 To thee, dear school-boy, whom my lay
 Has cheated of thy hour of play,
 Light task, and merry holiday!
 To all, to each, a fair good night,
 And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!





THE LADY OF THE LAKE

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

TO
THE MOST NOBLE
JOHN JAMES, MARQUIS OF ABERCORN,
&c &c &c

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR

ARGUMENT

THE Scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine in the West Highlands of Perthshire. The time of action includes six days, and the transactions of each day occupy a Canto.

CANTO FIRST

THE CHASE

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Eillean's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers slung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
'Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?
Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud
At each according praise was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed,
For still the bards of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless
eye



"The antlered monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste"

O wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand
 That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ,
 O wake once more ! though scarce my skill command
 Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay ,
 Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away ,
 And all unworthy of thy nobler strain ,
 Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway ,
 The wizard note has not been touched in vain
 Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again !

1 THE stag at eve had drunk his fill,
 Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
 And deep his midnight lair had made
 In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ,
 But, when the sun his beacon red ,
 Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
 The deep-mouthed bloodhound's heavy bay
 Resounded up the rocky way,
 And faint, from farther distance borne,
 Were heard the clanging hoof and horn

2 ^{As the} As chief who hears his warder call ,
 "To arms ! the foemen storm the wall,"
 The antlered monarch of the waste ^{with}
 Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
 But, ere his fleet career he took,
 The dew-drops from his flanks he shook ,
 Like crested leader proud and high ,
 Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky ;
 A moment gazed adown the dale,
 A moment snuffed the tainted gale , ^{which}
 A moment listened to the cry ,
 That thickened as the chase drew nigh ; ^{he}
 Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
 With one brave bound the copse he cleared
 And stretching forward free and far,
 Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var ^{near}

^{he} Yelled on the view the opening pack , ^{burst}
 Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back .
 To many a mingled sound at once
 The awakened mountain gave response.
 A hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
 Clattered a hundred steeds along,
 Their peal the merry horns rang out, ^{and}
 A hundred voices joined the shout ,
 With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
 No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew
 Far from the tumult fled the roe,
 Close in her covert covered the doe,
 The falcon, from her cairn on high, ^{he}
 Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
 Till far beyond her piercing ken ^{far}
 The hurricane had swept the glen ^{and}

Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
 Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,
 Fast on his flying traces came,
 And all but won that desperate game *The dogs*
 For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
 Vindictive toiled the blood-hounds stanch *there*
 Nor nerrer might the dogs attain,
 Nor farther might the quarry strain
 Thus up the margin of the lake,
 Between the precipice and brake, *the*
 O'er stock and rock their race they take -
 The Hunter marked that mountain high,
 The lone lake's western boundary,
 And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
 Where that rude rampart barred the way;
 Already glorying in the prize,
 Measured his antlers with his eyes,
 For the death-wound, and death halloo, *the*
 Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew;
 But, thundering as he came prepared,
 With ready arm and weapon bared,
 The wily quarry shunned the shock, *the*
 And turned him from the opposing rock,
 Then, dashing down a darksome glen, *a*
 Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
 In the deep Trosach's wildest nook *the*
 His solitary refuge took
 There, while close couched, the thicket shi
 Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
 He heard the baffled dogs in vain
 Raye through the hollow pass amain, *the*
 Chiding the rocks that yelled again
 Close on the hounds the hunter came,
 To cheer them on the vanished game
 But, stumbling in the rugged dell, *the*
 The gallant horse exhausted fell
 The impatient rider strove in vain
 To rouse him with the spur and rein,
 For the good steed, his labours o'er,
 Stretched his stiff limbs, to rise no more,
 Then, touched with pity and remorse,
 He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse
 "I little thought, when first thy rein
 I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
 That Highland eagle e'er should feed
 On thy fleet limbs my matchless steed!
 Woe worth the chase woe worth the day,
 That cost thy life, my gallant gray *presque*
 Then through the dell his horn resounds,
 From vain pursuit to call the hounds
 Back limped, with slow and crippled pace,

The sully leader of the chase,
 Close to their master's side they pre-
 With drooping tail and humbled crest,
 But still the dingle's hollow throat
 Prolonged the swelling bugle note
 The owlets started from their dream,
 The eagles answered with their scream,
 Round and around the sounds were ev-
 Till echo seemed an answering blast,
 And on the hunter hied his way,
 To join some comrades of the day,
 Yet often paused, so strange the road,
 So wondrous were the scenes it showed

11. The western waves of ebbing day
 Rolled o'er the glen their level way,
 Each purple peak, each shifty spire,
 Was bathed in floods of living fire
 But not a setting beam could glow
 Within the dark ravines below,
 Where twined the path, in shadow hid,
 Round many a rocky pyramid.
 Shooting abruptly from the dell
 Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;
 Round many an insulated mass,
 The native bulwarks of the pass,
 Huge as the tower which builders vain
 Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain
 Their rocky summits, split and rent,
 Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
 Or seemed fantastically set
 With cupola or minaret,
 Wild crests as pigod ever decked,
 Or mosque of eastern architect
 Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
 Nor lacked they many a banner fair,
 For, from their shivered brows displayed
 Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
 All twinkling with the dew drop sheen,
 The briar rose fell in streamers green,
 And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes,
 Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.
 Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
 Each plant or flower, the mountain's child
 Here eglantine embalmed the air,
 Hawthorn and hazel mingled there,
 The primrose pale, and violet flower,
 Found in each cliff a narrow bower,
 Fox-glove and night shade, side by side,
 Emblems of punishment and pride,
 Grouped their dark hues with every stain
 The weather-beaten crags retain

With boughs that quaked at every breath,
 Gray birch and aspen wept here and there,
 Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
 Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
 And higher yet, the pine-trees
 His shattered trunk, and frequent day,
 Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
 His boughs athwart the narrowed sky
 Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
 Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
 The wanderer's eye could barely view
 The summer heaven's delicious blue,
 So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
 The scenery of a fairy dream

- b. Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
 A narrow inlet, still and deep, *gray*
 Affording scarce such breadth of *blue*
 As served the wild-duck's brood to swim,
 Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
 But broader when again appearing,
 Tall rocks and tufted knolls then *face*
 Could on the dark-blue mirror trace,
 And farther as the hunter strayed, *seemed*
 Still broader sweep its channels made *over*
- c. The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
 Emerging from entangled wood, *thick*
 But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,
 Like castle girdled with its moat,
 Yet broader floods extending still,
 Divide them from their parent hill
 Till each, retiring, claims to be *promised*
 An islet in an inland sea

- d. And now, to issue from the glen,
 No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
 Unless he climb, with footing nice,
 A fair projecting precipice
 The broom's tough roots his ladder made
 The hazel saplings lent then aid
 e. And thus an airy point he won, *reached*
 Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
 One burnished sheet of living gold,
 Loch-Katrine lay beneath him rolled;
 In all her length far winding lay,
 With promontory, creek, and bay,
 And islands that, empurpled bright,
 Floated amid the livelier light; *brighter*
 And mountains that like giants stand
 To sentinel enchanted land *warrior*
 High on the south, huge Ben-venue
 Down to the lake in masses threw
 Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurried,

- The frag^{rant} scents of an earlier world,
 A wild^{ing} forest feathered o'er
 His ruin'd sides and summit bare,
 While on the north, through middle air,
 Ben an heaved high his forehead bare
 From the steep promontory gazed
 The stranger, raptur'd and amazed,
 And "What a scene were here," he
 "For princely pomp or churchman's
 On this bold brow, a lordly tower,
 In that soft vale, a holy's bowen,
 On yonder meadow, far away,
 The turrets of a cloister gray,
 How blithely might the bugle horn
 Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn:
 How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute,
 Chime, when the groves are still and mute
 And, when the midnight moon should live—
 Her forehead in the silver wave,
 How solemn on the ear would come
 The holy matins' distant hum,
 While the deep peal's commanding tone
 Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
 A sainted hermit from his cell,
 To drop a ben'd with every knell—
 And bugle, lute, and bell, and ill,
 Should each bewildered stranger call
 To friendly feast and lighted hall
 "Blithe were it then to wander here!
 But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,
 Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
 The course must give my evening fire,
 Some mossy bank my couch must be,
 Some rustling oak my canopy
 Yet pass with that,—the war and chase
 Give little choice of resting place,
 A summer night, in green-wood spent,
 (Were but to-morrow's merriment)
 But hosts may in these wilds abound,
 Such as are better missed than found
 To meet with Highland plunderers here
 Were worse than loss of steed or deer—
 I am alone,—my bugle strain
 My call some straggler of the train—
 O, fill the worst that may befall,
 Ere now this falchion has been tried
 But scarce again his horn he wound,
 When lo! forth starting at the sound
 From underneath an aged oak,
 That slanted from the islet rock,
 A Damsel guder of its way,

A little skiff ^{shot} to the bry,
 That round the promontory steep
 Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 The weeping willow twig to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow
 The boat had touched the silver strand,
 Just as the Hunter left his stand, ^{stade}
 And stood concealed amid the brake, ^{the}
 To view this Lady of the Lake
 The maiden paused, as if again
 She thought to catch the distant strain,
 With head up raised, and look intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art
 In listening mood she seemed to stand,
 The guardian Nard of the strand ^{shore}
 And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace ^{instru}
 A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
 Of finer form, or lovelier face
 What though the sun, with ardent frown,
 Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,
 The sportive toil, which, short and light, ^{eat}
 Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
 Served too in hastier swell to show
 Short glimpses of a breast of snow,
 What though no rule of courtly grace
 To measured mood had trained her pace,
 A foot more light, a step more true, ^{not}
 Ne'er from the heath flower dashed the dew,
 E'en the slight hue-bell raised its head,
 Elastic from her airy tread ^{light as air}
 What though upon her speech there hung
 The accents of the mountain tongue,—
 Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
 The listener held his breath to hear

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid,
 Her satin snood, her silken plaid, ^{shaw}
 Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed
 And seldom was a snood amid
 Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
 Whose glossy black to shame might bring
 The plumage of the raven's wing,
 And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
 Mantled a plaid with modest care,
 And never brooch the folds combined
 Al o'er a heart more good and kind
 Her kindness and her worth to spy,
 You need but gaze on Ellen's eye,

He told of his benighted road, ^c
 His ready speech flowed fair and free,
 In phrase of gentlest courtesy,
 Yet seemed that tone, and gesture bland,
 Less used to sue than to command *Cur*

- 22 Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,
 And, reassured, at last replied
 That Highland halls were open still
 To wildered wanderers of the hill
 "Nor think you unexpected come
 To yon lone isle, our desert home;
 Before the heath had lost the dew,
 This morn, a couch was pulled for you,
 On yonder mountain's purple head
 Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
 And our broad nets have swept the mere,
 To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
 "Now, by the rood, my lovely maid, ^a
 Your courtesy has erred," he said,
 "No right have I to claim, misplaced,
 The welcome of expected guest
 A wanderer here by fortune tossed, ^r
 My way, my friends, my courser lost,
 I ne'er before, believe me, fair, ^{fair}
 Have ever drawn your mountain air,
 Till on this lake's romantic strand,
 I found a fay in fairy land"—

"I well believe," the maid replied,
 As her light skiff approached the side,
 "I well believe that ne'er before
 Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's sho
 But yet, as far as yesternight,
 Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
 A gray haired sire, whose eye intent
 Was on the visioned future bent
 He saw your steed, a dappled gray, ^e
 Lie dead beneath the birchen way,
 Painted exact your form and mien,
 Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
 That tasselled horn so gaily gilt,
 That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
 That cap with heron's plumage trim, ^{He}
 And yon two hounds so dark and grim ^{to}
 He bade that all should ready be
 To grace a guest of fair degree; ^{of high}
 But light I held his prophecy,
 And deemed it was my father's horn,
 Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne "
 The stranger smiled — "Since to your hon
 A destined errant knight I come,
 Announced by prophet sooth and old, ^{true}

And every hardy plant ^{that} could bear
 Loch-Katrine's keen and searching a
 An instant in this porch she stayed,
 And gaily to the stranger said,
 "On Heaven and on thy lady call,
 And enter the enchanted hall!"

27. "My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
 My gentle guide, in following thee"—
 He crossed the threshold—and a clang
 Of angry steel that instant rang.
 To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
 But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
 When on the floor he saw displayed,
 Cause of the din, a naked blade
 Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung
 Upon a stag's huge antlers swung,
 For all around, the walls to grace,
 Hung trophies of the fight or chase
 A target there, a bugle here,
 A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
 And broad-swords, bows, and arrows store,
 With the tusked trophies of the boar
 Here grins the wolf as when he died,
 And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
 The frontlet of the elk adorns,
 Or mantles o'er the bison's horns,
 Pennons and flags defaced and stained,
 That blackening streaks of blood retained,
 And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
 With otter's fur and seal's unite,
 In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
 To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
 And next the fallen weapon raised,
 Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
 Sufficed to stretch it forth at length
 And as the brand he poised and swayed, &
 "I never knew but one," he said,
 "Whose stalwart arm might brook to vie
 A blade like this in battle-field"
 She sighed, then smiled and took the won
 "You see the guardian champion's sword
 As light it trembles in his hand,
 As in my grasp a hazel wand,
 My sire's tall form might grace the part
 Of Ferragus, or A-cubart
 But in the absent giant's hold
 Are women now, and menials old"

- 29 The mistress of the mansion came,
 Mature of age, a graceful dame,
 Whose easy step and stately port

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

Had well become a princely court,
 To whom, though more than kindred knew,
 Young Ellen gave a mother's due
 Meet welcome to her guest she made,
 And every courteous rite was paid
 That hospitality could claim,
 Though all unasked his birth and name,
 Such then the reverence to a guest
 That fellest foe might join the feast,
 And from his deadliest foeman's door
 Unquestioned turn, the banquet ^{of} ~~to~~ ^{door}
 At length his rank the stranger names
 "The Knight of Snowdon, James Fitz-James;
 Lord of a barren heritage, ^{inherited}
 Which his brave sires, from age to age,
 By their good swords had held with toil,
 His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
 And he, God wot, was forced to stand
 Oft for his right with blade in hand
 This morning with Lord Morry's train
 He chased a stalker stag in vain,
 Outstipped his comrades, missed the deer,
 Lost his good steed, and wandered here"
 Gladly
 Fain would the knight in turn requite
 The name and state of Ellen's sire,
 Well showed the elder lady's mien,
 That courts and cities she had seen,
 Ellen, though more her looks displayed
 The simple grace of sylvan maid,
 In speech and gesture, form and face,
 Showed she was come of gentle race, ^{mobile,}
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdon gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turned all inquiry light away,
 "Weird women wel by dale and down, ^{hull}
 We dwell afar from tower and town
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
 On wandering knights our spells we cast; ⁱⁿ
 While viewless minstrels touch the string,
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing"
 She sang, and still a harp unseen
 Filled up the symphony between.

SONG

31 "Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.

In our isle's enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall,
 Every sense in slumber dewing
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting fields no more,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
 Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
 Trump nor pibroch summon here *a m*
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping
 Yet the lark's shrill rise may come

At the daybreak from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum, *a m*
 Booming from the sedgey shallow *b*
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge here,
 Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing
 Shouting clans or squadrons stamping"

32. She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
 To grace the stranger of the day,
 Her mellow notes awhile prolong
 The cadence of the flowing song,
 Till to her lips in measured frame
 The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG (continued)

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
 Dream not with the rising sun—
 Bugles here shall sound reveille, *an*
 Sleep! the deer is in his den,
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying,
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
 How thy gallant steed lay dying
 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
 Think not of the rising sun,
 For at dawning to assail ye,
 Here no bugles sound reveille "

33. The hall was cleared—the stranger's bed
 Was there of mountain heather spread,
 Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
 And dreamed their forest sports again
 But vainly did the heath-flower shed
 Its moorland fragrance round his head;
 Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
 The fever of his troubled breast,
 In broken dreams the image rose
 Of varied perils, pains, and woes
 His steed now flounders in the brake,

At length with such a glow
 He seemed to walk, and speak of love,
 She listened with a blush and sigh,
 His suit was warm, his hopes were high,
 He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
 And a cold grapple met his grasp,
 The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
 Upon its head a helmet shone,
 Slowly enlarged to giant size,
 With darkened cheek and threatening eyes
 The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
 To Ellen still a likeness bore --
 He woke, and, pricking with fright,
 Recalled the vision of the night.
 The hearth's decaying brands were red,
 And deep and dusky lurked she,
 Half showing, half concealing all
 The uncouth trophies of the hall
 'Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
 Where that huge falchion hung on high,
 And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng
 Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along,
 Until, the giddy whirl to cure
 He rose, and sought the moonshine pure
 The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,
 Wafted around their rich perfume
 The birch trees wept in fragrant balm,
 The aspens slept beneath the calm,
 The silver light, with quivering glance,
 Played on the water's still expanse,
 All wild were the heart whose passion's sway
 Could rage beneath the sober ray!
 He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
 While thus he communed with his breast:

"Why is it at each turn I trace
 Some memory of that exiled race?
 Can I not mount a maiden spy,
 But she must bear the Douglas eye?
 Can I not view a Highland brand, *see*
 But it must match the Douglas hand?
 Can I not frame a severed dream,
 But still the Douglas is the theme?—
 I'll dream no more—by manly mind
 Not even in sleep is will resigned *also*
 My midnight orison said o'er, *pray*
 I'll turn to rest, and dream no more"
 His midnight orison he told, *chant*
 A prayer with every bead of gold,
 Consigned to Heaven his cares and woes,
 And sunk in undisturbed repose,
 Until the heath cock shrilly crew,
 And morning dawned on Ben-venue.

CANNO SECOND

THE ISLAND

- 1 At morn the black cock trims his jetty wing,
 His morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
 All Nature's children feel the matin spring
 Of life reviving with reviving day,
 And while yon little bark glides down the bry,
 Wasting the stranger on his way again,
 Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,
 And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
 Mixed with the sounding harp, O white-haired Allan bane!

SONG

"Not faster yonder rowers' might
 Flings from their oars the spray *!!*
 Not faster yonder rippling bright,
 That tracks the shallop's course in light,
 Melts in the lake away,
 Than men from memory cease
 The benefits of former days,
 Then, stranger, go! good speed the while
 Nor think again of the lonely isle

"High place to thee in royal court,
 High place in battled line,
 Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport,
 Where Beauty sees the brave resort,
 The honoured meed be thine!
 True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
 Thy lady constant kind, and dear,
 And lost in love and friendship's smile,
 Be memory of the lonely isle

- 3 "But if beneath yon southern sky
 A plumed stranger roam,
 Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
 And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
 Pined for his Highland home,
 Then, Warrior, then be thine to show
 The cure that soothes a wanderer's woe;
 Remember then thy harp erewhile
 A stranger in the lonely isle
- "Or if on life's uncertain main
 Mishap shall mar thy sail,
 If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
 Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
 Beneath the fickle gale,
 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
 On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
 But come where kindred worth shall smile,
 To greet thee in the lonely isle "
- 4 As died the sounds upon the tide,
 The shallop reached the mainland side
 And ere his onward way he took,
 The stranger cast a lingering look,
 Where easily his eye might reach
 The harper on the islet beach,
 Reclined against a blighted tree,
 As wasted, gray, and worn as he
 To minstrel meditation given,
 His reverend brow was raised to heaven
 As from the rising sun to dawn
 A sparkle of inspiring flame,
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,
 Seemed watching the awakening fire,
 So still he sat, as those who wait
 Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
 So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair,
 So still as life itself were fled,
 In the last sound his harp had sped.
- 5 Upon a rock with lichens wild,
 Beside him Ellen sat and smiled
 Smiled she to see the stately drake
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
 While her vexed sparrow, from the beach,
 Bayed at the prize beyond his reach,
 Yet tell me then, the maid who knows,
 Why deepened on her cheek the rose?
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
 Perchance the maiden smiled to see
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,

And stop and turn to wave new;
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ne
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
 Show me the fair would scorn to spy,
 And prize such conquest of her eye

- 6 While yet he loitered on the spot,
 It seemed as Ellen marked him not;
 But when he turned him to the glade,
 One courteous parting sign she made;
 And after oft that Knight would say,
 That not when prize of festal day
 Was dealt him by the brightest fair,
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
 So highly did his bosom swell,
 As at that simple mute farewell,
 Now with a trusty mountain guide,
 And his dark stag hounds by his side,
 He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
 Watched him wind slowly round the hill,
 But when his stately form was hid,
 The guardian in her bosom chid—
 “Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!”
 ‘Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,
 “Not so had Malcolm idly hung/
 On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
 Not so had Malcolm strained his eye
 Another step than thine to spy”—
 “Wake, Allan-bane!” aloud she cried,
 To the old minstrel by her side,—
 “Arouse thee from thy moody dream!”
 I’ll give thy harp heroic theme,
 And warm thee with a noble name,
 Pour forth the glory of the Græme”—
 Scarce from her lip the word had rushed,
 When deep the conscious maiden blushed,
 For of his clan, in hall and bower,
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

- 7 The minstrel waked his harp—three times,
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,
 And thrice their high heroic pride
 In melancholy murmurs died
 “Vainly thou biddest, O noble maid,”
 Clasp ing his withered hands, he said,
 “Vainly thou biddest me wake the strain,
 Though all unwont to bid in vain
 Alas! than mine a mightier hand
 Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned.
 I touch the chords of joy, but low
 And mournful answer notes of woe,
 And the proud march which victors tread
 Sinks in the wailing for the dead—

O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swa'd,
Can thus its master's fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

8. "But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed
The eve thy sainted mother died
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wailed loud through Bothwell's banniced hall,
Ere Douglases to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven —
Oh! if yet worse mishap and woe
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string,
One short, one final strain shall flow
Fraught with unutterable woe,
Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die!"

9 Soothing she answered him, "Assuage.
Mine honoured friend, the fears of age,
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale, or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear,
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resigned
Than yonder oak might give the wind,
The graceful foliage storms may reave
The noble stem they cannot grieve
For me,"—she stooped, and, looking round,
Plucked a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the len,
How well my simple emblem be,
As daisy's heaven's dew as blithe as rose

That in the King's own garden grows,
 And when I place it in my han,
 Allan, a bard is bound to swear,
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair "
 Then playfully the chaplet wild
 She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

- 10 Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
 Wiled the old harper's mood away,
 With such a look as hermits throw
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
 Thrilled to a ten, then thus replied
 "Loveliest and best ' thou little know'st
 The rank, the honours thou hast lost;
 O might I live to see thee grace,
 In Scotland's court, thy birthright place;
 To see my favourite's step advance,
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eye
 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart " /

- 11 "Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
 (Light was her accent, yet she sighed,)
 "This mossy rock, my friend, to me
 Is worth gay chair and canopy;
 Nor would my footstep spring more gay,
 In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
 Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
 To royal minstrel's lay as thine,
 And then for suitors proud and high,
 To bend before my conquering eye,
 Thou, flattering bard ' thyself wilt say
 That gum Sir Roderick owns its sway;
 The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
 The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,
 Would at my suit, thou know'st, delay
 A Lennox foray—for a day "

- 12 The ancient bard his glee repressed
 "Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest'
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled,
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew,
 I saw, when back the dusk he drew, *W.D.C.*
 Counters give place before the stride
 Of the undunted homicide,
 And since, though outlawed, hath his haric
 Full sternly kept his mountain land
 Who else dared give,—th' woe the day,
 That I such hated truth should say—
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,

Disowned by every noble peer,
 Even the rude refuge we have here? {
 Alas, this wild marauding chief
 Alone might hazard our relief, /
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand,
 Full soon may dispensation sought,
 To brack his suit, from Rome be brought
 'Then though in exile on the hill,
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still
 Be held in reverence and fear
 But though to Roderick thou'lt so dear
 That thou mightst guide with silken thread,,
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain'
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane" /

13. "Minstrel," the maid replied, and hugh
 Her father's soul glanced from her eye, /
 "My debts to Roderick's house I know:
 All that a mother could bestow
 To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
 Since first an orphan in the wild {
 She sorrowed o'er her sister's child /
 To her brave chieftain son, from ire
 Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
 A deeper, holier debt is owed,
 And, could I pay it with my blood,
 Allan! Sir Roderick should command
 My blood, my life,—but not my hand.
 Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
 A votaress in Maronnan's cell,
 Rather through realms beyond the sea,
 Seeking the world's cold charity,
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
 And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
 An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
 Than wed the man she cannot love
- 14 "Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses
 That pleading look, what can it say
 But what I own?—I grant him brave,
 But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave,
 And generous—sure vindictive mood
 Or jealous transport chase his blood. /
 I grant him true to friendly band,
 As his claymore is to his hand
 But O! that very blade of steel
 More mercy for a foe would feel
 I grant him liberal, to fling
 Among his clan the wealth they bring,
 When back by lake and glen they wind,
 And in the Lowland leave behind,

Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
 A mass of ashes staked with blood
 The hand, that for my father fought,
 I honour, as his daughter ought,
 But can I clasp it reeking red,
 From peasants slaughtered in their shed?
 No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
 They make his passions darker seem,
 And flash along his spirit high,
 Like lightning o'er the midnight sky
 While yet a child,—and children know,
 Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
 I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
 His shadowy plaid, and sable plume,
 A maiden grown, I ill could bear
 His haughty mien and lordly air,
 But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
 In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
 I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
 A Douglas knew the word, with fear
 To change such odious theme were best,—
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"

15. "What think I of him?—woe the while
 That brought such wanderer to our isle!
 Thy father's battle brand, of yore
 For Time-man sojourned by fairy lore,
 What time he leagu'd, no longer foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
 Did, self unscrubbed, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe
 If courtly spy, and harboured here, *hath*
 What may we for the Douglas fear?
 What for this island, deemed of old
 Clan Alpine's last and surest hold?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray
 What yet may jealous Roderick say?
 —Nay, wave not thy disdainful head!
 Bethink thee of the discord died
 That kindled when at Beltane game
 Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Grame
 Still, though thy smile the peace renewed
 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud
 Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
 My dull ears catch no filtering breeze, *gentle,*
 No weeping birch, nor aspens wake,
 Nor breath is dumpling in the lake,
 Still is the cannier's hoary beard,
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
 And hark again! some pipe of war *bagpipes*
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar!"

For in the lengthened lake were spied

From darkening speck upon the tide, ^{water}
 That, slow enfolding on the view,
 Four manned and masted barges grew,
 And bearing downwards from Glengyle,
 Stötered full upon the lonely isle, ^{direct}
 The point of Branchail they passed,
 And, to the windward as they cast,
 Against the sun they gave to shine
 The bold Sir Roderick's bannered pine
 Nearer and nearer as they beat,
 Spears, pikes and axes flash in an
 Now might you see the tutans brave,
 And plüds and plumage dance and wave,
 Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
 As his tough oar the rowers plies,
 See, flashing at each sturdy stroke, [✓]
 The wave ascending into smoke, [✓]
 See the proud pipeis on the bow,
 And mark the grudy stierams flow
 From their loud chanteis down, and sweep
 The furrowed bosom of the deep,
 As, rushing through the lake amun,
 They plied the ancient Highland stiam

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
 And louder rung the pibroch proud
 At first the sounds, by distance tame,
 Mellowed along the waters came,
 And, lingering long by cape and bay,
 Wüled every harsher note away,
 Then, bursting bolder on the ear,
 The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
 Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
 Of old Clan Alpine to the fight
 Thuck beat the rapid notes, as when
 The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
 And, hurrying at the signal dread,
 The battered earth returns then tread,
 Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
 Expressed their mery marching on,
 Ere peal of closing battle rose, ^{beginning}
 With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows.
 And mimic din of stroke and wind,
 As broadsword upon target jured,
 And groning pause, ere yet again,
 Condensed, the battle yelled amain,
 The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
 Retreat borne headlong into rout,
 And bursts of triumph, to declare
 Clan Alpine's conquest—all were there
 Nor ended thus the strain, but slow,
 Sank in a moan prolonged and low.

And changed the conquering claxon ^{notes} swell, &
I o' wild lament o'er those that fell

- 18 The war-pipes ceased, but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still,
And, when they slept, a vocal stream -
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their chieftain's praise
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burthen bore, ^{melody}
In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees
The chorus first could Allan know,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho' ho'!"
And near, and nearer, as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed

BOAT SONG

- 9 Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honoured and blessed be the ever-green pine!
Long may the tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy den,
Earth lend it sap and new, ^{twice}
Gaily to burgeon, and bravely to grow,
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho' ho'!"
- Our is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade,
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Fume! he roots him the ruder it blow,
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho' ho'!"
- 10 Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Bannoch's groans to our slogan replied
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan Alpine with feri and with woe,
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho' ho'!"
- Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green pine!
O' that the rosebud that graces yon islands

23 Allm, with wistful look the while,
 Marked Roderick standing on the isle.
 His master piteously he eyed,
 Then gazed upon the chieftain's pride,
 Then dashed, with hasty hand, away
 From his dimmed eye the gathering spray,
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
 'Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening eye?
 I'll tell thee—he recalls the day,
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the rich gate of Bothwell proud,
 While many a minstrel answered loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name
 As mighty as yon chief may claim,
 Giving my pomp, behind me came
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshalled crowd,
 Though the waned crescent owned my might,
 And in my train trooped lord and knight,
 Though Blunire hymned her holiest lays,
 And Bothwell's birds sung back my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection dear,
 A welcome gave more kind and true
 Than aught my better fortunes knew
 Forgive, my friend, a father's boast,
 O' it out beggars all I lost!"

24 Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
 That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
 The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,
 For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard
 The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
 The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide,
 The loved caresses of the maid
 The dogs with crouch and whimper paid,
 And, at her whistle, on her hand
 The falcon took his favourite stand.
 Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
 Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly
 And trust, while in such guise she stood,
 Like fabled Goddess of the Wood,
 That if a father's paternal thought
 O'erweighed her worth and beauty aught,
 Well might the lover's judgment fail
 To balance with a juster scale,
 For with each secret glance he stole,
 The fond enthusiast sent his soul

THE LADY OF THE LAKE,

25 Of stature fair, and slender frame,
 But firmly built, was Malcolm Grime,
 The belted plaid and tuffan hose,
 Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose,
 His shaven hair, of sunny hue,
 Curled closely round his bonnet blue,
 Turned to the chase his eagle eye,
 The pramugan in snow could spy,
 Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
 He knew, through Lennox and Mentath,
 Vain was the bound of dark brown doe,
 When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
 And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,
 Outstripped in speed the mountaineer,
 Right up Ben Lomond could he press,
 And not a sob his toil confess,
 His form recorded with a mind
 Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
 A blither heart, till Lllen came,
 Did never love nor sorrow tame,
 It danced as lightsome in his breast
 As played the feather on his crest
 Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
 His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
 And bards, who saw his features bold,
 When kindled by the tales of old,
 Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
 Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
 Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
 But quail to that of Malcolm Grime

26 Now back they wend their watery way,
 And "O my sire" did Lllen say,
 "Why urge thy chase so far astray?
 And why so late returned? And why? —
 The rest was in her speaking eye
 "My child, the chase I follow for,
 'Tis mimicry of noble war
 And with that gallant pastime lest
 Were all of Douglas I have left
 I met young Malcolm as I strayed
 Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
 Nor strayed I safe, for, all around,
 Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground,
 This youth, though still a royal ward,
 Risked life and land to be my guard,
 And through the passes of the wood
 Guided my steps not unpursued,
 And Roderick shall his welcome make,
 Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake
 Then must he seek Strath Lindrick glen,
 Nor peril ought for me again —"

- 27 Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
 Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme,
 Yet, nor in action, word, or eye,
 Failed aught in hospitality
 In talk and sport they whiled away
 The morning of that summer day,
 But at high noon a cooler light
 Held secret palfrey with the knight,
 Whose moody aspect soon declared
 That evil were the news he heard
 Deep thought seemed toiling in his head,
 Yet was the evening banquet made,
 Ere he assembled round the flame
 His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
 And Ellen too, then cast around
 His eyes, then fixed them on the ground,
 As studying phrase that might avail
 Best to convey unpleasant tale
 Long with his dagger's hilt he played,
 Then raised his haughty brow, and said —
- 28 “Short be my speech, —nor time affords,
 Nor my plain temper, glozing words
 Kinsman and father —if such name
 Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's clum,
 Mine honoured mother, Ellen —why,
 My cousin, turn away thine eye? —
 And Græme, in whom I hope to know
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,
 When age shall give thee thy command,
 And leading in thy native land, —
 I list all —The King's vindictive pride
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
 Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who ear
 To share their monarch's sylvan game,
 Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
 And when the banquet they prepared,
 And wide their loyal portals flung,
 O'er then our gateway struggling hung
 Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
 From Larrow bries, and banks of Tweed,
 Where the lone streams of Ettucke glide,
 And from the silver Teviot's side,
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,
 Are now one sheep-walk waste and wide
 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
 So faithless, and so ruthless known,
 Now hither comes, his end the same,
 The same pretext of sylvan game
 What grace for Highland chiefs judge ye,
 By fate of Border chivalry
 Yet more, and Glenfinlas green,

Douglas, the stately form was seen
 This by espal sure I know
 Your counsel in the straight I shew"—

- 29 Ellen and Margaret fearfully
 Sought comfort in each other's eye,
 Then turned their ghastly look, even one,
 This to her sire, that to her son
 The hasty colour went and came
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm's Grange,
 But, from his place it well appeared,
 'Twas but for Ellen that he feared,
 While sorrowful, but unmixed,
 The Douglas thus his counsel said.
 "Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
 It may but thunder and pass o'er,
 Nor will I here remain an hour,
 To draw the lightning on thy bower,
 For well thou know'st, at this gray head
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped
 For thee, who, at thy king's command,
 Canst aid him with a gallant hand,
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,
 Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside
 Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
 Ellen and I will seek, apart,
 The refuge of some forest cell,
 There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
 Till, on the mountain and the moor,
 The stern pursuit be passed, and o'er"—

- 30 "No, by mine honour!" Roderick said,
 "So help me Heaven, and my good blade!
 No never! Blasted be yon pauc,
 My fathers' ancient crest, and mine,
 If from its shade in danger part
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
 Hear my blunt speech grant me this maid
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid,
 To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
 Will friends and allies flock enow,
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
 Will bind to us each western chief
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 The guards shall start in Stirling's porch,
 And when I light the nuptial torch,
 A thousand villages in flames
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
 --Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray,
 I meant not all my heart might say
 Small need of sword, or of fight."

When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foiled King, from pathless glen,
 Shall bootless turn him home agen —

- 31 There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
 Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream
 Till wakened by the morning beam,
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around,
 And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale,
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel,
 Headlong to plunge himself below,
 And meet the worst his fears forèshow? —
 Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
 As sudden rum yawned around,
 By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
 Still for the Douglas ferring most,
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
 To buy his safety with her hand

- 32 Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
 And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
 Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
 Where death seemed combating with life
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
 One instant rushed the throbbing blood,
 Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
 Left its domain as wan as clay
 “Roderick, enough! enough!” he cried,
 “My daughter cannot be thy bride,
 Not that the blush to wooer deal,
 Nor paleness that of maiden fear
 It may not be—forgive her, chief,
 Nor hazard aught for our relief
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
 Will level a rebellious spear
 ’Twas I that taught his youthful hand
 To rein a steed and wield a brand
 I see him yet, the princely boy
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy,
 I love him still, despite my wrongs,
 By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.

O seek the grave you well may find,
Without a cause to turn your head!

- 33 Twice through the hall the Claret ran,
The waving of his tunic I read,
And darent I brow, where a wounded
With me and drippings of blood
Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill Daemon of the night,
Stooping his puny shoulders
Upon the night's pale rim;
But, unrequited Love! my dart
Plunged deepest its envenomed dart
And Roderick, with thine eyes, was strong,
At length the hand of Douglas, strong,
While eyes, that mocked at tears before,
With bitter drops were turned over
The death prangs of long cherished hope
Screed in that ample breast his rage,
But, struggling with his pent power,
Convulsive heaved it, chequered shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—
Was heard distinctly through the hall
The son's despair, the mother's wail,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook,
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Grunt

- 34 Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid.
"Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,
"Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
I think thou for punishment delayed"
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Gairne
"Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain safety, save his sword!"
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Gripped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength—"Chieftains, forgo!
I hold the first who stiles, my foe
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What is the Douglas fallen so far,

His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil¹
Sullen and slowly, they unclasp,
As struck with shame, then desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced, and blade half-bared

- 35 Eie yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
As faltered through terrific dream
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veiled his wrath in scornful word
"Rest safe till morning, pity 'twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air
Then mayst thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor hickey, with his free born clan,
The pageant pomp of earthly man
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show —
Malise, what ho!" — his henchman came
"Give our safe-conduct to the Grame"
Young Malcolm answered calm and bold,
"Fear nothing for thy favourite hold
The spot, an angel deigned to grace
Is blessed, though robbers haunt the place,
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight as in blaze of day,
Though, with his boldest at his back,
Even Roderick Dhu beset the track —
Brave Douglas, — lovely Ellen, — nay,
Nought here of parting will I say
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret but we meet agen —
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour,"
He said, and left the sylvan bower

- 36 Old Allan followed to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas's command,
And anxious told, how on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
The Fierly Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down and noor
Much were the peril to the Grame
From those who to the signal came,
Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand
He gave his counsel to the wind
While Malcolm did, unheeding hind
Round duk and pouch and broadsword roiled,

His ample plaid in tighter red fold,
And stripped his limb to each arm;
As best might suit the watery way]

- 37 Then spoke abrupt "Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"
The minstrel's heart he kindly pre-
"O! could I point a place of rest,—
My sovereign holds in ward my lord,
My uncle leads my vassal band,
To tame his foe, his friend, to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade,
Yet, if there be one faithful friend,
Who loves the Chestnut of my name,
Not long shall honoured Donal dwell,
Like hunted stag, in mountain cell,
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare,—
I may not give the rest to air,—
Till Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a host,
To wait me to yon mountain side"
Then plunged he in the flashing tide
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steered him from the shore;
And Allan strained his anxious eye,
Far 'mid the lake his form to spy
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave,
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb,
Then, landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell
The minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD

THE GATHERING

TIME rolls his ceaseless course The race of yore
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures hopped by land or sea
How rare they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered of their force,
Wulf, on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his cease-
course

Yet live there still who can remember well
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew,

And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
 What time the warning note was keenly wound,
 What time aloft then hundred banner flew,
 While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering sound,
 And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

2. The summer dawn's reflected hue
 To purple changed Loch-Lathane blue;
 Mildly and soft the western breeze
 Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
 Trembled, but dimpled not for joy,
 The mountain-shadows on her breast
 Were neither broken nor at rest,
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice reared of silver bright,
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemmed with dew drops, led her fawn;
 The gray mist left the mountain-side,
 The torrent showed its glistening pride,
 Invisible in flecked sky,
 The lark sent down her revelry,
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush
 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush,
 In answer cooed the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace, and rest, and love
- 3 No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast,
 With sheathed broad-sword in his hand,
 Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
 And eyed the rising sun and hid
 His hand on his impatient blade
 Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
 Was prompt the signal to prepare,
 With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
 For such Antiquity had taught
 Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
 The Cross of Fire should take its road
 The shrinking band stood oft against
 At the impatient glance he cast,—
 Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
 As from the cliffs of Ben-venue
 She spied her dark sails on the wind,
 And high in middle heaven reclined,
 With her broad shadow on the lake,
 Silenced the waileis of the brake
- 4 A heap of withered boughs was piled,
 Of juniper and rowan wild,
 Mingled with shivers from the oak,
 Rent by the lightning's recent stroke

Burn the Hermit by it stood,
 Barefooted, in his fiöck and hood
 His grised beard and matted hair
 Obscured a visage of despair,
 His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er
 The scars of frantic penance bore
 That Monk, of savage form and face
 The impending danger of his race
 Had drawn from deepest solitude,
 Far in Benharrow's bosom rude
 Not his the mien of Christian priest
 But Druids from the grave released,
 Whose hardened heart and eye might brook
 On human sacrifice to look
 And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
 Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er,
 The hallowed creed gave only woe
 And deadlier emphasis of curse
 No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
 His cave the pilgrim shunned with care,
 The eager huntsman knew his bound,
 And in mid chase called off his hound,
 Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
 The desert dweller met his path,
 He prayed, and signed 'the cross between,
 While ferior took devotion's mien

- 5 Of Burn's birth strange tales were told
 His mother watched a midnight fold,
 Built deep within a dreary glen,
 Where scattered lay the bones of men,
 In some forgotten battle slain,
 And bleached by drifting wind and rain.
 It might have timed a warrior's heart,
 To view such mockery of his art
 The knot-grass fettered there the hand
 Which once could burst an iron band;
 Beneath the broad and ample bone,
 That bucklered heart to fear unknown,
 A feeble and a timorous guest,
 The fieldfare framed her lowly nest,
 Here the slow blind-worm left his slime
 On the fleet limbs that mocked at time,
 And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
 Still wreathed with chaplet flushed and full
 For heath bell, with her purple bloom,
 Supplied the bonnet and the plume
 All night, in this sad glen, the maid
 Sat shrouded in her mantle's shade
 —She said, no shepherd sought her side,
 No hunter's hand her snood untied,
 Yet ne'er again to braid her hair

The virgin snood did Alice wear,
 Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
 Her maiden girdle all too short,
 Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
 Or holy church or blessed rite,
 But locked her secret in her bier,
 And died in travail, unconfessed.

6 Along, among his young conspeers,
 Was Brian from his infant years,
 A moody and heart-broken boy,
 Estranged from sympathy and joy,
 Bearing each trait which careless tongue
 On his mysterious lineage shung,
 Whole nights he pent by moonlight pale,
 To wood and stream his hap to wail
 Till, frantic, he as truth received
 What of his birth the crowd believed,
 And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
 To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
 In vain to soothe his wayward fate
 The cloister oped her pitying gate,
 In vain, the learning of the age
 Unclasped the sable-lettered page,
 Even in its treasures he could find
 A food for the fever of his mind
 Eager he read whatever tells
 Of magic, cabala, and spells,
 And every dark pursuit allied
 To curious and presumptuous pride,
 Till, with fired brain and nerves o'ersprung,
 And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
 Desperate he sought Benhrurrow's den,
 And hid him from the haunts of men

7 The desert gave him visions wild,
 Such as might suit the spectre's child
 Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
 He watched the wheeling eddies boil,
 Till, from their form, his dazzled eyes
 Beheld the river demon rise,
 The mountain mist took form and limb
 Of noontide hag, or goblin gum,
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,
 Swelled with the voices of the dead,
 Far on the future battle-heath
 His eye beheld the ruins of death,
 Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurled,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world
 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind
 The only parent he could claim
 Of ancient Alpine's lineage came

"Woe to the traitor, woe !

Ben-an's gray scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle screamed afar, —
They knew the voice of Alpine's war

10 The shout was hushed on lake and fell,
The Monk resumed his muttered spell
It smail and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame,
And the few words that reached the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer
But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud —
"Woe to the wretch, who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear !
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home, the refuge of his fear,

A kindred fate shall know,
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
While mads and nations on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
And infamy and woe " —

Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goss-hawks whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling till
Of curses stammered slow,

Answering, with imprecation dread,
"Sunk be his home in embers red !
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head
We doom to want and woe !"

A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave !
And the gray pass where birches wave,
On Beala-nam-bo

11 Then deeper paused the priest anew
And hard his labouring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched hand
And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
Who, summoned to his Christum's aid,
The signal saw and disobeyed
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
He quenched among the bubbling blood
And as again the sign he reared,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard
"When flits this Cross from man to man

Vich Alpine's summons to his clan,
 Burst be the ear that fail'd to heed !
 Palsied the foot that shuns to speed !
 May ravens tear the circles eyes ;
 Wolves make the coward heart their prize !
 As sinks that blood stream in the earth,
 So may his heart's blood drench his hearth !
 As die, in hissing gore the spail,
 Quench thou his light, Destruction dail !
 And be the grace to him denied,
 Bought by this sign to all be idle !
 He cursed no echo gave again
 The murmur of the deep Amen

- 12 Then Roderick, with impatient look,
 From Brian's hand the symbol took :
 "Speed, Malise, speed !" he said and gave
 The crosslet to his henchman brave
 "The muster place be I would need—
 Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed !"
- Like heath bird, when the hawk pursue,
 A barge across Loch Katrine flew,
 High stood the henchman on the prow,
 So rapidly the bargemen row,
 The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
 Were all unbroken and afloat,
 Dancing in foam and ripple still,
 When it had neared the mainland hill,
 And from the silver beach's side
 Still was the prow three fathom wide,
 When lightly bounded to the land
 The messenger of blood and brand !
- 13 Speed, Malise speed ! the dun deer's hide
 On fleetest foot was never tied
 Speed, Malise, speed ! such cause of haste
 Thine active sinews never brace
 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
 Burst down like torrent from its crest,
 With short and springing footstep pass
 The trembling bog and false morass
 Across the brook like roebuck bound,
 And thread the brake like questing hound ?
 The crag is high, the scur is deep,
 Yet shrink not from the desperate leap,
 Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
 Yet by the fountain pause not now,
 Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
 Stretch onward in thy fleet career !
 The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
 Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
 Nor pliest thou now thy flying prey
 With rivals in the mountain race,

But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Aie in thy course—speed, Malise, speed!

- 14 Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise,
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hudy tenant down
Nor slack'd the messenger his pace,
He showed the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand,
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe his scythe,
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow stay'd,
The falconer tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay,
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray
Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,
The lark's blithe carol from the cloud
Seems for the scene too gaily loud

- 15 Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is passed,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green,
There mayst thou rest, thy labour done
Their lord shall speed the signal on—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way
What woeful accents loud the gale!
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place?
Within the hall, where torches' ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

CORO 'ACH

- 16 He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest,
The font, reappearing,
From the run-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering
To Duncan no morrow!
The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory,
The autumn winds rushing
Wist the leaves that are scarest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest
Fleet foot on the corner,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!
- 17 See Stumrah, who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed
Poor Stumrah whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears
'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
Uge the precipitate career
All stand aghast — unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall,
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood,
"The muster-place is Lamick mead,
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"
- 18 Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign
In haste the stipling to his side
His father's dirk and broad-sword tied,
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu
'Alas!' she sobbed—"and yet, be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's sor!"

One look he cast upon the bier
 Dashed from his eye the gathering tear
 Breathed deep to clear his labouring breast,
 And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,
 Then, like the high-bred colt when freed—
 First he essays his fire and speed,
 He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
 Sped forward with the Fiery Cross
 Suspended was the widow's tear,
 While yet his footstep she could hear,
 And when she marked the henchman's eye
 Wet with unwonted sympathy,
 "Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,
 That should have sped thine errand on;
 The oak has fallen,—the sapling bough
 Is all Duncraggan's shelter now
 Yet trust I well, his duty done,
 The orphan's God will guard my son
 And you, in many a danger true,
 At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
 To arms, and guard that orphan's head
 Let babes and women wail the dead"
 Then weapon-cling, and martial call,
 Resounded through the funeral hall,
 While from the walls the attendant band
 Snatched sword and targe, with hurried hand,
 And short and flitting energy
 Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
 As if the sounds to warrior dear
 Might rouse her Duncan from his bier
 But faded soon that borrowed force,
 Grief claimed his right, and tears their course

Benledi saw the Cross of Gue,
 It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire
 O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
 Not rest nor praise young Angus knew,
 The tear that gathered in his eye
 He left the mountain breeze to dry,
 Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
 That graced the sable strath with green
 The chapel of Saint Bride was seen
 Swollen was the stream, remote the bridge,
 But Angus paused not on the edge,
 Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
 Though reeled his sympathetic eye,
 He dashed amid the torrent's roar
 His right hand high the crosslet bore,
 His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide
 And stay his footing in the tide
 He stumbled twice—the foam splashed high,

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

With hoarser swell the stream laced by,
 And had he fallen—for ever there,
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasped the Cross of stife,
 Until the opposing bank he gained,
 And up the chapel pathway struned

- 20 A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
 Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride
 Her tithing Tomber's Mary gave)
 To Norman, heir of Armandave,
 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
 The bridal now resumed their march
 In rude, but glad procession, came
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame,
 And plumed youth, with jest and jeer,
 Which snooded maiden would not hear,
 And children, that, unwitting why,
 Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry,
 And minstrels, that in measures wied
 Before the young and bonny bride,
 Whose downcast eye and cheek discloses—
 The tear and blush of morning rose
 With virgin step, and bashful hand,
 She held the kerchief's snowy band,
 The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
 Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
 And the glad mother in her ear
 Was closely whispering word of cheer

- 21 Who meets them at the churchyard gate?
 The messenger of fear and fate!
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,
 And grief is swimming in his eyes
 All dripping from the recent flood,
 Panting and travel-soiled he stood,
 The fatal sign of fire and sword
 Held forth, and spoke the appointed word,
 "The muster-place is Laurick men,
 Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"
 And must he change so soon the hand,
 Just linked to his by holy band,
 For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
 And must the day, so blithe that rose,
 And promised rapture in the clove
 Before its setting hour, divide
 The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
 O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
 Clan Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
 Her summons dread, brooks no delay,
Stretch to the race—ay ay! ay ay!
- 22 Yet slow he laid his plaid aside.

And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
 Until he saw the starting tear
 Speak woe he might not stop to cheer,
 Then, trusting not a second look,
 In haste he sped him up the brook
 Nor backward glanced, till on the heath,
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith --
 What in the racer's bosom stirred?
 The sickening pang of hope deferred,
 And memory, with a torturing train
 Of all his morning visions vain
 Mingled with love's impatience, car'd
 The manly thirst for martial fame,
 The stormy joy of mountaineers,
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears,
 And zeal for clan and chieftain burning,
 And hope, from well-fought field returning,
 With war's red honours on his crest,
 To clasp his Mary to his breast
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
 Like fire from flint he glanced away,
 While high resolve, and feeling strong,
 Burst into voluntary song

SONG

23 The heath this night must be my bed,
 The bracken curtain for my head,
 My lullaby the warden's tread,
 Far, far from love and thee, Mary,
 To-morrow eve, more stilly hid,
 My couch may be my bloody plaid,
 My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
 It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
 The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
 I dare not think upon thy vow,

And all it promised me, Mary
 No fond regret must Norman know,
 When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
 His heart must be like bended bow,
 His foot like arrow free, Mary

A time will come with feeling fraught!
 For, if I fall in battle fought,
 Thy hapless lover's dying thought
 Shall be a thought on thee, Mary
 And if returned from conquer'd foes,
 How blithely will the evening close,
 How sweet the linnet sing repose
 To my young bride and me, Mary!

24 Not faster o'er thy heathery braes
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze

Rushing in conflagration strong,
 Thy deep ravines and dells along,
 Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
 And reddening the dark lakes below,
 Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of war
 The signal roused to martial coil
 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
 Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course,
 Thence southward turned its rapid road
 Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad
 Till rose in arms each man might claim
 A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the gray sire, whose trembling hand
 Could hardly bicker on his brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
 Were yet scarce terror to the crow,
 Each valley, each sequestered glen,
 Mustered its little hoide of men,
 That met as torrents from the height
 In Highland dale their streams unite,
 Still gathering, as they pour along,
 A voice more loud, a tide more strong.
 Till at the rendezvous they stood
 By hundreds prompt for blows and blood
 Each trained to arms since life began,
 Owning no tie but to his clan,
 No oath, but by his Chieftain's hand,
 No law, but Roderick Dhu's command

- 25 That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
 Surveyed the skirts of Ben-venue,
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
 To view the frontiers of Menteith
 All backward came with news of truce
 Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce
 In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
 No banner waved on Cudross gate,
 On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
 Nor scared the herons from Loch Con,
 All seemed at peace — Now, wot ye why
 The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
 Ere to the muster he repair,
 This western frontier scanned with care —
 In Ben-venue's most darksome cleft,
 A fur, though cruel pledge was left,
 For Douglas, to his promise true,
 That morning from the isle withdrew
 And in a deep sequestered dell
 Had sought a low and lonely cell
 By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,

Has Coir-nan-Uiskin been sung,
 A softer name the Saxon gave,
 And called the grot the Goblin-cave
 6 It was a wild and strange retreat,
 As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet
 The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
 Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast,
 Its trench had stayed full many a rock,
 7 Hurled by primeval earthquake shock
 From Ben venue's gray summit wild,
 And here, in random ruin piled,
 They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,
 And formed the rugged sylvan grot
 The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
 At noontide there a twilight made,
 Unless when short and sudden shone
 Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
 With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
 Glimpsed on thy depth, Futurity
 No murmur waked the solemn still
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill,
 But when the wind chafed with the lake,
 A sullen sound would upward break,
 With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
 The incessant war of wave and rock
 Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
 Seemed nodding o'er the cavern gray
 From such a den the wolf had sprung,
 In such the wild cat leaves her young,
 Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
 Sought, for a space, their safety there
 Gray Superstition's whisper drear
 Debated the spot to vulgar tread,
 8 For there, she said, did fays resort,
 And satyrs hold their sylvan court,
 By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
 And blast the rash beholder's gaze
 Now eve, with western shadows long,
 Flashed on Katrine bright and strong,
 When Roderick, with a chosen few,
 Repassed the heights of Ben venue
 Above the Goblin-cave they go,
 Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo,
 The prompt retainers speed before,
 To launch the shallop from the shore,
 For 'cross Loch-Katrine lies his way
 To view the passes of Achray,
 And place his clansmen in array
 Yet lags the Chief in musing mind,
 Unwonted sight, his men behind
 A single page, to bear his sword,

'Alone attended on his lord,
 The rest their way through thickets break,
 And soon await him by the lake
 It was a fall and gallant sight,
 To view them from the neighbouring height,
 By the low-levelled sunbeam's light,
 For strength and stature, from the clan
 Each warrior was a chosen man,
 As even afar might well be seen,
 By their proud step and martial mien
 Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
 Their targets gleam, as by the boat
 A wild and warlike group they stand,
 That well became such mountain strand !

- 28 Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
 Was lingering on the craggy hill,
 Hard by where turned apart the road
 To Douglas's obscure abode
 It was but with that dawning morn
 That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
 To drown his love in war's wild roar,
 Nor think of Ellen Douglas more,
 But he who stems a stream with sand,
 And fetters flame with seven band,
 His yet a harder task to prove—
 By firm resolve to conquer love !
 Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
 Still hovering near his treasure lost,
 For though his haughty heart deny
 A parting meeting to his eye,
 Still fondly strains his anxious ear
 The accents of her voice to hear,
 And only did he curse the breeze
 That waked to sound the rustling trees !
 But, hark ! what mingles in the strain ?
 It is the harp of Allán-bane,
 That wakes its measures slow and high,
 Attuned to sacred minstrelsy
 What melting voice attends the strings ?
 'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings !

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

- 29 *Ave Maria* ! maiden mild !
 Listen to a maiden's prayer
 Thou canst hear though from the wild,
 Thou canst save amid despair
 Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
 Though banished, outcast, and reviled—
 Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer,
 Mother, hear a suppliant child ! *Am*
Ave Maria !

17. *Maria* ' undefiled ' !

The slimy couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there
The murky caverns heavy an
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled,
Then, Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child !

Ave Maria !

Ave Maria ' stainless styled !

Thou demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair
We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer
And for a father hear a child !

Ave Maria !

30. *Due* on the *harp* the *absorbing* hymn—

Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As listening still, Clan Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline,
Then, while his plaid he round him cast,
"It is the last time—'tis the last,"—
He muttered thrice,—"the last time e'er"
That angel voice shall Roderick hear !"
It was a gōding thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain-side,
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant 'cross the lake it shot ✓
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lamuck height,
Where mustered in the vale below
Clan-Alpine's men in mutil show

31. A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly stryed,
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and bracken green, ✓
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

But, when, advancing through the cloven,
 They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume
 Their shout of welcome, shrill and wild,
 Shook the steep mountain's rocky side
 Thrice it rose, and lake and fell
 Three times returned the martial yell
 It died upon Lochmuckle's plain,
 And Silence chimed her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH

THE FLOODEY

"THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new
 And hope is brightest when it dawns from dew
 The rose is sweetest when it withers from dew
 And love is loveliest when embriall'd in tears
 O wild rose, whom fancy thus endears,
 I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
 Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
 Thus spake young Norman, heir of Arundel,
 What time the sun rose on Vennachar's broad vale.

2 Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
 Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue
 All while he stripped the wild rose spray,
 His axe and bow beside him lay,
 For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
 A wakeful sentinel he stood
 Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
 And instant to his arms he sprung
 "Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
 Art thou returned from Brac of Doune
 By thy Leen step and glance I know,
 Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe!"
 (For while the Fieri Cross lied on,
 On distant scout had Malise gone.)
 "Where sleeps the Chief?" the henchman said
 "Apart, in yonder misty glade
 To his lone couch I'll be your guide"
 Then called a slumberer by his side,
 And stared him with his slackened bow—
 "Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
 We seek the Chieftain, on the track,
 Keep eagle watch till I come back!"

3 Together up the pass they sped
 "What of the foeman?" Norman said
 "Varying reports from near and far,
 This certain—that a band of war
 Has for two days been ready boune,
 At prompt command, to march from Doune
 King James, the while, with princely powers,
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers"

Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud
 Intfied to bide such bitter bout,
 The warrior's plaid may bear it out ;
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
 A shelter for thy bonny bride ?”

“What ! know ye not that Roderick's care
 To the lone isle hath caused repair
 Each maid and matron of the clan,
 And every child and aged man
 Unfit for arms, and given his charge,
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,
 But all beside the islet moor,
 That such dear pledge may rest secure ?”

4 “’Tis well advised —the Chieftain's plan
 Bespeaks the father of his clan /
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
 Apart from all his followers true ?”

“It is because last evening tide
 Brian an augury hath tried,
 Of that dread kind which must not lie
 Unless in dread extremity,
 The Taghairm called, by which, afar
 Our sires foresaw the events of war
 Dunciagga's milk white bull they slew —

MALISE

“Ah ! well the gallant brute I knew
 The choicest of the prey we had,
 When swept our merry-men Gallingrad
 His hide was snow, his horns were dark
 His red eye glowed like fiery spark,
 So fierce, so timeless, and so fleet
 Sore did he cumber our retreat,
 And kept our stoutest Leines in awe,
 Even at the pass of Beal'mhara
 But steep and flinty was the road,
 And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
 And when we came to Denna's Row,
 A child might scathless stroke his brow !”

NORMAN

5 “That bull was slain his reeking hide
 They stretched the catract beside,
 Whose waters their wild tumult toss
 Adown the black and craggy boss
 Of that huge cliff whose ample veige
 Tradition calls the Hero's Targe
 Couched on a shelf beneath its brink,
 Close where the thundering torrents sink
 Roaring beneath their headlong sway

And drizzled by the ceaseless pray,
 'Midst gloom of woe, and roar of stream,
 The wizard waits prophetic dream
 Nor distant rests the Chief — but hush!
 See, gliding slow through mist and bush
 The Hermit gams yon rocl, and stands
 To gaze upon our slumbering band.
 Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
 That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?
 Or raven on the blasted oak,
 That, watching while the deer is brok,
 His morsel chums with sullen croak?"

MALISE

"Perce! perce! to other than to me,
 Thy words were evil augury
 But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
 Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
 Not ought that, gleamed from heaven or hell,
 Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell
 The Chieftun joins him, see—and I ow,
 Together they descend the brow!"—

- 6 And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
 The Hermit Monk held solumn word
 "Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
 For man endowed with mortal life,
 Whose shroud of sentient clay can sti,
 Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
 Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
 Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
 'Tis hard for such to view, unfurled,
 The curtain of the future world
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,—
 My soul with horrowing anguish torn,
 — This for my chieftun have I borne!
 The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
 A human tongue may ne'er vouch,
 No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,
 Had e'er survived to say he saw
 At length the fateful answer came,
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
 But borne and branded on my soul,—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST IOEMAN'S LIFE
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."
- 7 "Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair
 Clan-Alpine reer in battle stood,
 But first our broad-swords tasted blood.

A sure! victim still I know,
 Self-offered to the auspicious blow,
 A spy hath sought my land this morn,
 No eye shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to south,
 Red Murdoch, bided to be his guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
 He light on those shall bring him down!
 But see, who comes his news to show!
 Mahse! what tidings of the foe?

8 "At Doune, o'er many a spear and glave,
 Two Barons proud their banners wave
 I saw the Moray's silver stai,
 And marked the sable pale of Mar"—
 "By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes
 When move they on?"—"To morrow's noon
 Will see them here for battle boune!"
 "Then shall it see a meeting stein!"
 But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
 Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
 Strengthened by them we well might bide
 The battle on Benledi's side—
 Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine's men
 Shall man the Trosach's shaggy glen,
 Within Loch-Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
 All in our maids' and matrons sight,
 Each for his hearth and household fire,
 Father for child, and son for sire,
 Lover for maid beloved!—but why—
 Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
 Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear!
 A messenger of doubt or fear?
 No! sooner may the Saxon lance
 Unfix Benledi from his stance,
 Than doubt or terror can pierce through
 The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu,
 'Tis stubborn as his trusty targe—
 Each to his post!—all know their charge!"
 The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
 The broad swords gleam, the banners dance,
 Obedient to the Chieftain's glance
 I turn me from the martial roar,
 And seek Corr-Uiskin once more

9 Where is the Douglas?—he is gone,
 And Ellen sits on the gray stone
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan:
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer
 Are poured on her unheeding ear—

“He will return—Dear lady, trust!—
 With joy return,—he will—he must
 Well was it time to seek afar
 Some refuge from impending war, /
 When e’en Clan-Alpine’s rugged swarm
 Are cowed by the approaching storm
 I saw their boats, with many a light
 Floating the live-long yesternight,
 Shifting like flashes darted forth
 By the red streamers of the north,
 I mark’d at morn how close they ride,
 Thick moored by the lone islet’s side,
 Like wild ducks couching in the fen
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen
 Since this rude race dare not abide
 The peril on the main-land side,
 Shall not thy noble father’s cue
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare?”—

ELLEN

- 10 “No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
 My wakeful terrors could not blind
 When in such tender tone, yet grave,
 Douglas a parting blessing gave,
 The tear that glistened in his eye
 Drowned not his purpose fixed and high /
 My soul, though feminine and weak,
 Can image his, e’en as the lake,
 Itself disturbed by slightest stroke
 Reflects the invulnerable rock
 He hears report of battle rise,
 He deems himself the cause of strife /
 I saw him redden, when the theme
 Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream,
 Of Malcolm Graeme in fetters bound,
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound ✓
 Think’st thou he trowed thine omen right?
 Oh no! ’twas apprehensive thought
 For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
 (Let me be just) that friend so true,
 In danger both, and in our cause!
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause
 Why else that solemn warning given,
 ‘If not on earth, we meet in heaven?’
 Why else, to Cumbus-Kenneth’s fane,
 If e’er return him not again,
 Am I to hug and make me known?
 Alas! he goes to Scotland’s throne,
 Buys his friend’s safety with his own,
 He goes to do—what I had done,
 Had Douglas’s daughter been his son! }
- 1 “Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!

If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane
 As fitting place to meet again
 Be sure he's safe, and for the Græme,
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!
 My visioned sight may yet prove true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you!
 When did my gifted dream beguile?
 Think of the stranger at the isle,
 And think upon the harpings slow,
 That presaged this approaching woe!
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear,
 Believe it when it augurs cheer!
 Would we had left this dismal spot!
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot
 Of such a wondrous tale I know—
 Dear lady, change that look of woe!
 My harp was wont thy guest to cheer"—

ELLEN

"Well, be it as thou wilt, I hear,
 But cannot stop the bursting tear!
 The Minstrel tried his simple art,
 But distant far was Ellen's heart!"

BALLAD

ALICE BRAND

- 12 Merry it is in the good green wood,
 When the mavis and merle are singing,
 When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
 And the hunter's horn is ringing
 "O Alice Brand, my native land
 Is lost for love of you,
 And we must hold by wood and wold,
 As outlaws wont to do
 "O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
 And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
 That on the night of our luckless flight
 Thy brother bold I slew
 "Now must I teach to hew the beech
 The hand that held the glave,
 For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
 And stakes to fence our cave
 "And for rest of pail, thy fingers small
 That wont on harp to striv
 A cloak must sheer from the slaughtered deer
 To keep the cold way!
 "O Richard 'if my brother died
 'Twas but a fatal chance,
 For darling was the battle tried,
 And Fortune sped the lance!"

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

"If pall and vain no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey;
As grey the forest-green

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand "

- 13 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good green wood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing,
On the beech's pride, and the oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer?
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairie's fatal green?"

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hue,
For thou wert christened man,
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban

"Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye,
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die"—

- 14 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good green wood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing
The evening blaze doth Alice rise,
And Richard is fagots bringing

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands"

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer "

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,

The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand"—

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand
And made the holy sign,—

"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself?
And what thine errand here?"—

15 "'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairyland,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing }

And gaily shines the Fairyland—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow

"And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape

"It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King his power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away
To the joyless Elfin bower

"But wist I of a woman bold
Who thence my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine "

She crossed him once—she crossed him twice—
That lady was so brave,
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand'

Merry it is in the good green wood,
When the mavis and merle are singing
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,
When all the bells were ringing

16 Just as the minstrel sounds were staid
A stranger climbed the steepy glade

His martial step, his stately mien,
 His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
 His eagle glance, remembrance clings—
 'Tis Snowdon's Knight—'tis James Fitz-James
 Ellen beheld as in a dream,
 Then starting, scarce suppressed a scream
 "O stranger! in such hour of fear,
 What evil hap has brought thee here?"—
 "An evil hap how can it be
 That bids me look again on thee?
 By promise bound, my former guide
 Met me betimes this morning tide,
 And marshalled, over bank and bourne,
 The happy path of my return"—
 "The happy path!—what! said he nought
 Of war, of battle to be fought,
 Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
 Nor saw I aught could rugur scathe"—
 "O haste thee, Allan, to the keine,
 Yonder his tartans I discern,
 Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
 That he will guide the stranger sure!—
 What prompted thee, unhappy man?
 The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
 Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him, to guide thee here"—

- 17 "Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
 Since it is worthy care from thee,
 Yet life I hold but idle breath,
 When love or honour's weighed with death
 Then let me profit by my chance,
 And speak my purpose bold at once
 I come to bear thee from a wild
 Where ne'er before such blossom smiled,
 By this soft hand to lead thee far
 From frantic scenes of feud and war
 Near Bochart's my horses wait,
 They bear us soon to Stirling gate
 I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
 I'll guard thee like a tender flower,
 "O! hush, Sir Knight! 'were female and
 To say I do not read thy heart,
 Too much, before, my selfish ear
 Was idly soothed my praise to hear
 That fatal but hath lured thee back,
 In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track,
 And now, O how, can I atone
 The wreck my vanity brought on!
 One war remains—I'll tell him all—
 Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
 Thou, whose light folly bears the blame

Buy thine own pardon with thy shame !
 But first—my father is a man
 Outlawed, and exiled, under ban,
 The price of blood is on his head,
 With me 'twere infamy to wed—
 Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth !
 Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
 If yet he is—exposed for me
 And mine to dread extremity,—
 Thou hast the secret of my heart ;
 Forgive, be generous, and depart !”—

- 18 Fitz-James knew every wily trait
 A lady's fickle heart to gain,
 But here he knew and felt them vain
 There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
 To give her steadfast speech the lie, /
 In maiden confidence she stood,
 Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
 And told her love with such a sigh
 Of deep and hopeless agony,
 As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom,
 And she sat sorrowing on his tomb
 Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,
 But not with hope fled sympathy
 He proffered to attend her side,
 As brother would a sister guide—
 “O ! little knowest thou Roderick's heart !
 Safer for both we go apart
 O haste thee, and from Allan learn
 If thou mayst trust yon wily kene”—
 With hand upon his forehead laid,
 The conflict of his mind to shade,
 A parting step or two he made
 Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,
 He paused, and turned, and came again

- 19 “Hear, lady, yet, a parting word !—
 It chanced in fight that my poor sword
 Preserved the life of Scotland's lord
 This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
 And bade, when I had boon to crave,
 To bring it back, and boldly claim
 The recompense that I would name
 Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
 But one who lives by lance and sword,
 Whose castle is his helm and shield,
 His lordship, the embattled field
 What from a prince can I demand,
 Who neither reck of state nor land?
 Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine,
 Each guard and usher knows the sign /
 Seek thou the king without delay,

This signet shall secure thy way,
 And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
 As ransom of his pledge to me"—
 He placed the golden circlet on,
 Paused—kissed her hand—and then was gone
 The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
 So hastily Fitz-James shot past
 He joined his guide, and wending down
 The ridges of the mountain brown,
 Across the stream they took their way
 That joins Loch-Katrine to Achray

- 20 All in the Trosach's glen was still,
 Noontide was sleeping on the hill
 Sudden his guide whooped loud and high—
 "Murdoch! was that a signal-cry?"
 He stammered forth,—"I shout to scare
 Yon raven from his duntie fare"
 He looked—he knew the raven's prey,
 His own brave steed—"Ah! gallant gray!"
 For thee—for me perchance—'twere well
 We ne'er had seen the Trosach's dell—
 Murdoch, move first—but silently,
 Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
 Each silent, each upon his guard

21. Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
 Around a precipice's edge,
 When lo! a wasted female form,
 Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
 In tattered weeds and wild array,
 Stood on a cliff beside the way,
 And glancing round her restless eye
 Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
 Seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy
 Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom.
 With gesture wild she waved a plume
 Of feathers, which the eagles fling
 To crag and cliff from dusky wing,
 Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
 Where scarce was footing for the goat
 The tartan plaid she first descried,
 And shrieked, till all the rocks replied;
 As loud she laughed when near they drew,
 For then the Lowland gub she knew,
 And then her hands she wildly wrung,
 And then she wept, and then she sung—
 She sung!—the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime,
 But now, though strained and roughened, still
 Ringing wildly sweet to dale and hill

SONG

- 22 "They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
 They say my brain is warped and wrung—
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
 I cannot play in Highland tongue,
 But were I now where Allan glides,
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,
 So sweetly would I rest and pray
 That heaven would close my wintry day !
 "'Twas thus my hymn they bade me braid,
 They bade me to the church repair,
 It was my bridal morn, they said,
 And my true love would meet me there
 But woe betide the cruel guile,
 That drowned in blood the morning smile !
 And woe betide the fairy dream !
 I only waked to sob and scream "
- 23 "Who is this maid ? what means her lay ?
 She hovers o'er the hollow way,
 And flutters wide her mantle gray,
 As the lone heron spreads his wing,
 By twilight, o'er a haunted spring"—
 "'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
 "A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
 Tr'ed on the morn she was a bride,
 When Roderick forayed Devan-side
 The gay bridegroom resistance made,
 And felt our Chief's unconquered blade
 I marvel she is now at large,
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge,—
 Hence, brain-sick fool !" He raised his bow —
 "Now, if thou strikest her but one blow,
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
 As ever peasant pitched a bar"
 "Thanks, champion, thanks !" the Maniac cried
 And pressed her to Fitz-James's side
 "See the gray pennons I prepare, see —
 To seek my true-love through the air !
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy plume !
 No !—deep amid disjointed stones,
 The wolves shall bitten on his bones,
 And then shall his detested plaid,
 By bush and brier in mid-air stayed,
 Wave forth a banner fair and free,
 Meet signal for their revelry "
- 24 "Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still" —
 "O ! thou look'st kindly, and I will —
 Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
 But still it loves the Lincoln green ;

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue

"For O my sweet William is forster true,
He stole poor Blanche's heart av !
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
And so blithely he told the Lowland lay ! —

"It was not that I meant to tell
But thou art wise, and guesses well " —
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on
Still on the clansman, fearfully,
She fixed her apprehensive eye,
Then turned it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen

25 "The toils are pitched, and the stales are set
Ever sing merrily, merrily,
The bows they bend, and the hounds they lie
Hunters live so cheerily

"It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing his branches sturdily,
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardly, hardly

"It was there he met with a wounded doe
She was bleeding deathfully,
She warned him of the toils below,
O so faithfully, faithfully !

"He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily,
He had a foot, and he could speed —
Hunters watch so narrowly "

26. Fitz James's mind was passion-tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost,
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought —
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
"Disclose thy treachery, or die ! " —
Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast
Murdoch of Alpine ! prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need !
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind !
Fate judges of the rapid strife —
The forfeit, death — the prize is life !
Thy hundred ambush lies before,

Close couch'd upon the heathery moor,
 Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
 Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
 The fiery Saxon guns on thee!
 Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
 As lightning strikes the pine to dust,
 With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
 Ere he can win his blade again
 Bent o'er the fallen, with falcon eye,
 He grimly smiled to see him die,
 Then slower wended back his way
 Where the poor maiden bleeding lay

- 27 She sate beneath the buchen tree,
 Her elbow resting on her knee,
 She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
 And gazed on it, and feebly hughed,
 Her wreath of bloom and feathers gray,
Diggled with blood, beside her lay
 The Knight to stanch the life-stream true
 "Stranger, it is in vain!" she cried,
 "This hour of death has given me more
 Of reason's power than years before,
 For, as these ebbing veins decay,
 My frenzied visions fade away.
 A helpless injured wretch I die,
 And something tells me in thine eye,
 That thou wert mine avenger born
 Seest thou this tress?—O! still I've worn
 This little tress of yellow hair,
 Though danger, frenzy, and despair!
 It once was bright and clear as thine,
 But blood and tears have dimmed its shine
 I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,
 Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
 Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
 And thou wilt bring it me again—
I waver still!—O God! more bright
 Let Reason beam her parting light!
 O! by thy knighthood's honoured sign,
 And for thy life preserved by mine,
 When thou shalt see a darksome man
 Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's clan,
 With tutuns broad and shadowy plume,
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devon's wrong!
 They watch for thee by pass and fell
 Avoid the path Oh God! farewell!"
- 28 A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James,

Fast poued his eye at pity's clime,
 And now, with mingled grief and ire,
 He saw the murdered maid expire
 "God, in my need, be my relief,
 As I weak this on yonder Chief!"—
 A lock from Blanche's tresses fur
 He blended with her bridegroom's hair.
 The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
 And placed it on his bonnet side
 ' By Him whose word is truth ' I swear
 No other favour will I wear,
 Till this sad token I imbrue
 In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
 But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
 The chase is up,—but they shall know,
 The stag at bay's a dangerous foe!"—
 Bared from the known but guarded way,
 Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
 And oft must change his desperate trail,
 By stream and precipice turned back
 Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
 From lack of food and loss of strength,
 He couched him in a thicket horn,
 And thought his toils and perils o'er —
 "Of all my rash adventures past,
 This frantic feat will prove the last!
 Who e'er so mad but might have guessed
 That all this Highland hornet's nest
 Would muster up in swarms so soon
 As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?
 Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
 Hark, to the whistle and the shout!
 If farther through the wilds I go,
 I only fall upon the foe,
 I'll couch me here till evening gray,
 Then darkling try my dangerous way."

- 29 The shades of eve come slowly down
 The woods are wrapped in deeper brown,
 The owl awakens from her dell,
 The fox is heard upon the fell,
 Enough remains of glimmering light
 To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
 Yet not enough from far to show
 His figure to the watchful foe
 With cautious step, and ear awake,
 He climbs the crag and threads the brake
 And not the summer solstice, there,
Tempered the midnight mountain air,
 But every breeze that swept the wold,
 Benumbed his drenched limbs with cold
 In dread, in danger, and alone,

Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on,
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close before him burned

- 30 Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked, in his plaid, a mountaineer,
And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
"Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"—
"A stranger"—"What dost thou require?"—
"Rest and a guide, and food and fire
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost"—
"Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No"—
"Thou dar'st not call thyself a foe?"—
"I dare" to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand"—
"Bold words!—but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and time the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
Who ever recked, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?
Thus, treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou comest a secret spy!"
"They do, by Heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their cheek!"—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of knight!"—
"Then, by these tokens mayst thou know,
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe!"—
"Enough, enough, sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare!"—

- 31 He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain deer,
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid,
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech addressed
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true,
Each word against his honour spoke
Demands of me avenging stroke,
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid
It rests with me to wind my horn,
Thou art with numbers overborne,
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art to bid thee stand
But nor for clan nor kindred's cause,

Will I depart from honour' law,
 To assail a wounded man were shame,
 A stranger is a holy name
 Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
 In vain he never must require.
 I then rest thee here till dawn of day,
 Myself will guide thee on the way,
 O'er stock and stone, through wick and ward
 Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
 As far as Coilantogle's ford,
 From thence thy warrant is thy sword' --
 "I take thy courtesy, by Heaven,
 As freely 's tis nobly given' --
 "Well, rest thee, for the bittern's cry
 Sings us the lake's wild lullaby' --
 With that he shook the gathered heath,
 And spread his plaid upon the wreath,
 And the brave foemen, side by side,
 Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
 And slept until the dawning beam
 Purpled the mountain and the stream

CANTO FIFTH

THE COMBAT

- 1 Far as the earliest beam of eastern light,
 When first, by the bewildered pilgrim spied,
 It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
 And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
 And lights the fearful path on mountain side, --
 Far as that beam, although the faintest sun,
 Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
 Shine mutual Faith, and Courtesy's bright star.
 Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow
 of War
- 2 That early beam, so fair and sheen,
 Was twinkling through the hazel screen
 When, rousing at its glimmer red,
 The warriors left their lowly bed,
 Looked out upon the dappled sky,
 Muttered their soldier matins by,
 And then awaked then free, to steal,
 As short and rude, their soldier meal }
 That o'er, the Gael round him threw
 His graceful plaid of varied hue,
 And, true to promise, led the way,
 By thicket green and mountain gray
 A winding path! -- they wended now
 Along the precipice's brow
 Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
 The windings of the Forth and Teith,

And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky,
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gazed not the length of horseman's lance
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fun
Assistance from the hand to gain,
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew.
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

3 At length they came where stern and steep
The hill sinks down upon the deep
Here Vennachan in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone
A hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high
It held the copse in rivalry
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill,
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrent down had borne,
And heaped upon the cumbered land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And asked Fitz-James by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu?

4 "Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side,
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
"I deemed not now to claim its aid
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,
All seemed as peaceful and as still
As the mist slumbering on yon hill,
Thy dangerous chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war
Thus sad, at least, my mountain guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied!"—
"Yet why a second venture try?"—
"A warrior thou, and ask me why?"—
Moves out his course by such fixed cause

As gives the poor mechanic law?
 Enough, I sought to drive away
 The last hours of peaceful day,
 Slight cause will then suffice to rouse
 A knight's free foot-step for and a ride—
 A falcon flown, a greyhound strayed,
 The merry place of mountain maid,
 Or, if a path be dangerous I say,
 The danger's self is lure alone"—

- 5 "Thy secret I keep, I urge thee not,—
 Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
 Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,
 Against Clan-Alpine raised by Moray?
 —"No, by my word,—of banners prepared
 To guard King James', 'ports I heard;
 Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
 This muster of the mountaineer,
 Their pennons will abroad be flung,
 Which else in Doune had peaceful hung
 "I see be they flung!—for we were loth
 Their silken folds should fast the morn
 Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
 Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave
 But, stranger, peaceful since you came,
 Bewildered in the mountain game,
 Whence the bold boast by which you shake
 Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe?"
 "Warrior, but yester-morn I knew
 Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Save as an outlawed desperate man,
 The chief of a rebellious clan,
 Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
 With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight,
 Yet this alone might from his part
 Sever each true and loyal heart"—

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
 Dark lowered the clansman's sable cowl
 A space he paused, then sternly said,—
 "And heardst thou why he drew his blade?
 Heardst thou that shameful word and blow
 Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
 What recked the Chieftain, if he stood
 On Highland heath or Holy Rood?
 He rights such wrong where it is given,
 If it were in the court of Heaven"—
 "Still was it outrage,—yet, 'tis true,
 Not then claimed sovereignty his due,
 While Albany, with feeble hand,
 Held borrowed truncheon of command
 The young King, mewed in Stirling tower,
 Was stranger to respect and power |

But then, thy Chieftain's robber life !
 Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
 Wrenching from ruined Lowland swam
 His herds and harvest reared in vain,—
 Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
 The spoils from such foul foray borne "

7. The Gael beheld him gum the while,
 And answered with disdainful smile,
 "Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
 I marked thee send delighted eye,
 Far to the south and east, where lay,
 Extended in succession gay,
 Deep waving fields and pastures green,
 With gentle slopes and groves between —
 These fertile plains, that softened vale,
 Were once the birthright of the Gael,
 The stranger came with iron hand,
 And from our fathers left the land.
 Where dwell we now ! See, rudely swell
 Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell
 Ask we this savage hill we tread
 For fattened steer or household bread,
 Ask we for flocks these shingled dry,
 And well the mountain might reply,—
 'To you, as to your sires of yore,
 Belong the target and claymore '
 I give you shelter in my breast,
 Your own good blades must win the rest '—
 Pent in this fortress of the North,
 Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
 To spoil the spoiler as we may,
 And from the robber rend the prey ?
 Ay, by my soul !—While on yon plain
 The Saxon rears one shock of grain,
 While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
 But one along yon river's maze,—
 The Gael, of plain and river heir,
 Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share
 Where live the mountain chiefs who hold
 That plundering Lowland field and fold
 Is right but retribution true ?
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu "

8 Answered Fitz-James—"And, if I sought,
 Think'st thou no other could be brought ?
 What deem ye of my path waded,
 My life given o'er to ambuscade ?"
 "As of a meed to rashness due
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
 I seek my hound, or falcon strayed,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go,

But secret path marks secret foe⁹
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury "—
 "Well, let it pass, nor will I now
 Fresh cause of enmity now,
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride }
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
 In peace, but when I come again,
 I come with banner, brand and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.
 For love-lorn swain, in lady's bowel,
 Ne'er painted for the appointed hour,
 As I, until before me stand
 This rebel Chieftain and his band "—

- 9 "Have then thy wish!"—he whistled shrill,
 And he was answered from the hill,
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,
 From crag to crag the signal flew
 Instant, through copse and heath, arose
 Bonnets, and spears, and bended bows
 On right, on left, above, below,
 Sprung up at once the lurking foe,
 From shingles gray their lances start,
 The bracken-bush sends forth the dart,
 The rushes and the willow-wand
 Are bristling into rage and brand,
 And every tuft of broom gives life
 To plaided warrior armed for strife
 That whistle garrisoned the glen
 At once with full five hundred men,
 As if the yawning hill to heaven
 A subterranean host had given
 Watching their leader's beck and will,
 All silent there they stood and still,
 Like the loose crags, whose threatening mass
 Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
 As if an infant's touch could urge
 Their headlong passage down the verge,
 With step and weapon forward flung,
 Upon the mountain-side they hung
 The mountaineer cast glance of pride
 Along Benedi's living side,
 Then fixed his eye and sable brow
 Full on Fitz James—"How say'st thou now?
 These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true,
 And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!" ✓
- 10 Fitz James was brave—Though to his heart
 The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,

He manned himself with dauntless air,
 Returned the Chief his haughty stare,
 His back against a rock he bore,
 And firmly placed his foot before +
 "Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
 From its firm base as soon as I!"—
 Sir Roderick marked—and in his eyes
 Respect was mingled with surprise,
 And the stern joy which warriors feel
 In foemen worthy of their steel
 Short space he stood—then waved his hand
 Down sunk the disappearing band,
 Each warrior vanished where he stood,
 In broom or bracken, heath or wood,
 Sunk brand and spear and bended bow
 In osiers pale and copses low
 It seemed as if then mother Earth
 Had swallowed up her warlike birth
 The wind's last breath had tossed in air
 Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
 The next but swept a lone hill-side,
 Where heath and fern were waving wide,
 The sun's last glance was glinted back,
 From spear and glaive, from fringe and jack,
 The next, all unreflected, shone
 On bracken green and cold gray stone

- II Fitz-James looked round—yet scarce believed
 The witness that his sight received,
 Such apparition well might seem
 Delusion of a dreadful dream
 Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
 And to his look the Chief replied,
 "Fear nought—nay that I need not say—
 But—doubt not nought from mine array,
 Thou art my guest,—I pledged my word
 As far as Colintogle foid
 Nor would I call a clansman's brand
 For aid against one valiant hand,
 Though on our strife lay every vail
 Rent by the Saxon from the Gael
 So move we on,—I only meant
 To show the reed on which you learnt,
 Deeming this path you might pursue
 Without a pass from Roderick Dhu"—
 They moved—I said Fitz-James was brave,
 As ever knight that belted glaive,
 Yet dare not say, that now his blood
 Kept on its wont and tempered flood,
 As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
 That seeming lonesome pathway through
 Which yet, by fearful proof, was life

With lances, that to take his life
 Wanted but signal from a guide,
 So late dishonoured and defied /
 Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
 The vanished guardians of the ground,
 And still from copse and heather dale
 Fancy saw spear and broadsword pale,
 And in the plover's shrilly cry,
 The signal whistle heard again /
 Not breathed he free till far behind
 The pass was left, for then they wind
 Along a wide and level green,
 Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
 Nor rush, nor bush of broom was near,
 To hide a bonnet or a spear

- 12 The Chief in silence stole before,
 And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
 Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
 From Vennacher in silver breasts,
 Sweeps through the plain, and cerulean mines
 On Bochart the mouldering lines.
 Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
 Of yore her eagle wings unfurled
 And here his course the Chieftain stayed,
 Threw down his target and his plaid,
 And to the Lowland warrior said —
 "Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
 Vich Alpine has discharged his trust
 This murderous chief, this ruthless man,
 This herd of a rebellious clan,
 Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
 Far past Clan Alpine's outmost guard
 Now, man to man, and steel to steel
 A chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel
 See, here, all vantageless I stand,
 Armed, like thyself, with single brand,
 For this is Couintogle foid,
 And thou must keep thee with thy sword" —

The Saxon paused — "I ne'er delayed,
 When foeman bade me draw my blade,
 Nay more, brave Chief, I vowed thy death
 Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
 And my deep debt for life preserved,
 A better meed have well deserved —
 Can nought but blood our feud atone?
 Are there no means?" — "No, Stranger, none!
 And here, — to fire thy flagging zeal, —
 The Saxon cause rests on thy steel,
 For thus spoke Fate by prophet bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Who spills the foremost foeman's life

His party conquers in the strife"—
 "Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
 "The riddle is already read /
 Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff—
 There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff
 Thus Fate has solved her prophecy,
 Then yield to Fate, and not to me
 To James, at Stirling, let us go,
 When, if thou wilt, be still his foe,
 Or if the King shall not agree
 To grant thee grace and favour free,
 I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
 That, to thy native strengths restored,
 With each advantage shalt thou stand,
 That aids thee now to guard thy land"—

14 Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—

"Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
 Because a wretched kerne ye slew,
 Homage to none to Roderick Dhu?
 He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
 Thou add'st but fuel to my hate—
 My clansman's blood demands revenge—
 Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
 As that of some van carpet-knight,
 Who ill deserved my courteous care,
 And whose best boast is but to wear
 A braid of his fair lady's hair"—
 "I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!" ✓
 It nerves my heart, it steels my sword,
 For I have sworn this braid to stain
 In the best blood that warms thy vein
 Now, truce, farewell! and ruth begone!—
 Yet think not that by thee alone,
 Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown,
 Though not from copse, or heath, or curn,
 Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
 Of this small horn one feeble blast
 Would fearful odds against thee cast
 But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
 We try this quarrel hilt to hilt!"—
 Then each at once his falchion drew,
 Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
 Each looked to sun, and stream, and plain ✓
 As what they ne'er might see again,
 Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
 In dubious strife they darkly closed

15 Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu
 That on the field his targe he threw,
 Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
 Hard death so often dashed aside,

For, trained abroad his arms to use,
 Fitz-James's blade was sword and buck,
 He practised every pass and ward,
 To thrust, to strike, to jump, to guard,
 While, less expert, though strong, — for,
 The Gael maintained unequal war
 Three times in closing strife they stood,
 And thrice the Saxon sword drank blood;
 No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
 The gushing flood the warriors dyed,
 Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
 And showered his blows like winter rain;
 And, as firm rock or castle-roof,
 Against the winter shower is proof,
 The foe, invulnerable wall,
 Foiled his wild rage by ready fall,
 Till, at advantage taken, his brand
 I forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
 And, backwards borne upon the lee,
 Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

- 16 "Now, yield thee, or, by Him who made
 The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade
 "Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!"
 Let recreant yield who fears to die!"
 Likeadder darting from his coil,
 Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
 Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
 Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprang,
 Received, but reeled not of a wound,
 And locked his arms his foeman round —
 Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
 No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
 That desperate grasp thy frame might feel
 Through bars of brass and triple steel —
 They tug, they strain! — down, down, they go,
 The Gael above, Fitz-James below
 The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
 His knee was planted on his breast,
 His clotted locks he backward threw,
 Across his brow his hand he drew,
 From blood and mist to clear his sight,
 Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright! —
 —But hate and fury ill supplied
 The stream of life's exhausted tide,
 And all too late the advantage came,
 To turn the odds of deadly game,
 For, while the dagger gleamed on high,
 Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye
 Down came the blow! but in the heath
 The erring blade found bloodless sheath
 The struggling foe my now unchar-

The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp,
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose

17. He filtered thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhoped, from desperate strife,
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipped the bruid,—
“Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid,
Yet with thy foe, must die, or live,
The praise that Faith and Valour give”—
With that he blew a bugle-note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sate down his brow and hands to lave
Then faint arf are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet,
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
By loosened rein, a saddled steed,
Each onward held his headlong course.
And by Fitz-James reined up his horse,
With wonder viewed the bloody spot—
—“Exclaim not, gallants! question not
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight,
Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fiesh horse and sitting weed
The sun rides high,—I must be boun
To see the richer-game at noon,
But lightly Bayard clears the lea,—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me!

- 18 “Stand, Byard, stand!”—the steed obeyed,
With riching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye, and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear
No foot Fitz-James in stir up stayed,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Luned on the horse his armed heel,
And stirred his courage with the steel
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then, like a bolt, from steel cross bow
Forth lunched, along the plain they go
They dashed that rapid torrent through,

- 17 As up the stony path they strangle,
 Sudden his steed the leader reined
 A signal to his squire he flung,
 Who instant to his trumpet sprung:—
 "Seest thou, De Vaux, yon warrior gray,
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
 Of stature tall and poor man's
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
 With which he scales the mountain-side?
 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whither?"
 "No, by my word,—a burly groom
 He seems, who in the field or chase
 A Baron's train would nobly grace."
 "Out, out, De Vaux! canst thou supply,
 And jealousy, no sharper eye?
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I knew,
 Like foam in Scotland is not seen
 Treads not such step on Scottish green
 'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!
 The uncle of the banished Earl
 Away, away, to court, to show
 The near approach of dreaded foe,
 The king must stand upon his guard,
 Douglas and he must meet prepared."
 Then right hand wheeled then steeds, and straight
 They won the castle's postern gate
- 20 The Douglas, who had bent his way
 From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey gray,
 Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf,

Held sad communion with himself —
 "Yes! all is true nae fairs could frame
 A prisoner lies the noble Grame,
 And fiery Roderick soon will feel
 The vengeance of the royal steel
 I, only I, can waid their fate,—
 God grant the ransom come not late!
 The Abbess hath her promise given,
 My child shall be the bride of heaven,
 —Be pardoned one repining tear!
 For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
 How excellent—but that is by,
 And now my business is to die
 —Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
 A Douglas by his sovereign bled,
 And thou, oh stair and fatal mound!
 That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
 As on the noblest of the land
 Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,
 The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
 Prepare,—for Douglas seeks his doom!
 —But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
 Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
 And see! upon the crowded street,
 In motley groups what masquers meet!
 Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
 And merry moirice-dancers come
 I guess, by all this quint array,
 The burghers hold their sports to day
 James will be there,—he loves such show
 Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
 And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
 As well as where, in proud career,
 The high-born tilter shivers spear!
 I'll follow to the Castle park,
 And play my prize,—King James shall mark
 If age has tamed these sinews stark,
 Whose force so oft, in happier days,
 His boyish wonder loved to praise"—

- 21 The Castle gates were open flung,
 The quivering drawbridge rock'd and rung,
 And echoed loud the flinty street
 Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
 As slowly down the steep descent
 For Scotland's King and nobles went,
 While all along the crowded way
 Was jubilee and loud hurra!
 And ever James was bending low,
 To his white jennet's saddle bow,
 Doffing his cap to city dame,
 Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame:

And well the sumpster might be vain /
 He chose the fairest of the train,
 Gravely he greets each city sire,
 Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
 Lives to the dancers thanks aloud,
 And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
 Who send the heavens with their acclams,
 "Long live the Commons' King, King James!"
 Behind the King thronged peer and knight,
 And noble dame and damsel bright,
 Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the stry
 Of the steep street and crowded way
 —But in the train you might discern
 Dark lowering brow and visage stern
 There nobles mourned their pride restrained,
 And the mean burghers' joys disdained,
 And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
 Were each from home & banished man,
 There thought upon their own gray tower,
 Their waving woods, their feudal power,
 And deemed themselves a shameful part
 Of pageant, which they cursed in heart

- 22 Now in the Castle park, drew out
 Their chequered bands the joyous rout
 Their morrises, with bell at heel,
 And blade in hand, their mazes wheel,
 But chief, beside the butts, there stand
 Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
 Friar Tuck with quarter-staff and cowl,
 Old Scathelocke with his sulky scowl,
 Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John,
 Their bugles challenge all that will, ✓
 In archery to prove their skill
 The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
 His first shaft centred in the white,
 And when in turn he shot again,
 His second split the first in twain
 From the King's hand must Douglas take |
 A silver dart, the archers' stake,
 Fondly he watched, with watery eye,
 Some answering glance of sympathy,—
 No kind emotion made reply!
 Indifferent as to richer wight,
 The Monarch gave the arrow bright ✓

- 23 Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand
 The manly wrestlers take their stand
 Two o'er the rest superior rose,
 And proud demanded mightier foes,
 Nor called in vain, for Douglas came
 —I or life, is Hugh of Larbeit lame, |

Scuce better John of Allor's fare,
 Whom senseless home his comrades bear
 Prize of the wrestling match, the King
 To Douglas gave a golden ring,
 While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
 As frozen drop of wintry dew
 Douglas would speak, but in his breast
 His struggling soul his words suppressed
 Indignant then he turned him where
 Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
 To hurl the massive bar in air
 When each his utmost strength had shown,
 The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
 From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
 And sent the fragment through the sky,
 A rood beyond the farthest mark,—
 And still in Stirling's royal park,
 The gray-haired sies who know the past
 To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
 And mourn on the decay
 Of Scottish strength in modern day

24. The vale with loud applauses rang,
 The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang,
 The King, with look unmoved, bestowed
 A purse well filled with pieces broad
 Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
 And threw the gold among the crowd,
 Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
 And sharper glance, the dark gray man,
 Till whispers rose among the throng,
 That heart so free, and hand so strong,
 Must to the Douglas blood belong
 The old men marked, and shook the head,
 To see his hair with silver spread,
 And winked aside, and told each son
 Of feats upon the English done, &
 Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
 Was exiled from his native land
 The women praised his stately form,
 Though wrecked by many a winter's storm.
 The youth, with awe and wonder, saw
 His strength surpassing nature's law
 Thus judged, as is their wont the crowd,
 Lill murmurs rose to clamours loud
 But not a glance from that proud ring
 Of peers who circled round the King
 With Douglas held communion kind,
 Or called the banished man to mind,
 No, not from those who, at the chase,
 Once held his side the honoured place,
 Begirt his bound, and, in the field,

"Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
 Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
 The only man, in whom a foe
 My woman-mercy would not know
 But shall a Monarch's presence brook
 Injurious blow, and haughty look?—
 What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
 Give the offender fitting waid —
 Break off the sports!"—for tumult rose,
 And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows—
 "Break off the sports!" he said, and frowned
 "And bid our horsemen clear the ground!"—

- 27 Then uproar wild and misery
 Marred the fair form of festal day
 The horsemen pricked among the crowd,
 Repelled by threats and insult loud,
 To earth were borne the old and weak,
 The timorous fly, the women shriek,
 With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bal.
 The harder urge tumultuous war
 At once round Douglas darkly sweep
 The royal spears in circle deep,
 And slowly scale the pathway steep,
 While on their steed in thunder pour
 The rabble with disordered war
 With grief the noble Douglas saw
 The commons rise against the law,
 And to the leading soldier said,
 "Sir John of Hyndford! 'twas my blade
 That knighthood on thy shoulder laid,
 For that good deed, permit me then
 A word with these misguided men —
- 28 "Hear, gentle friends! ere yet, for me,
 Ye break the bands of fealty
 My life, my honour, and my cause,
 I tender free to Scotland's laws;
 Are these so weak as must require
 The aid of your misguided ire?
 Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
 Is then my selfish rage so strong,
 My sense of public weal so low,
 That, for mere vengeance on a foe,
 Those cords of love I should unbind,
 Which knit my country and my kind?
 Oh no! Believe, in yonder tower
 It will not soothe my captive hour
 To know those spears our foes should dread
 For me in kindred gore were red,
 To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
 For me, that mother wails her son,
 For me, that widow's mate expires,

To me, that orphan weep their woes,
 That patriots' moans insulted know,
 And curse the Douglas for the crew,
 O let your patience ward even ill,
 And keep your right to love me still! —

- 29 The crowd's wild fury ebb'd again
 In tears, as tempest, melt in rain
 With lifted hands and eyes they pray'd
 For blessings on his generous head,
 Who for his country felt alone
 And pierc'd her blood-lake, and his own
 Old men, upon the verge of life,
 Blessed him who staved the evil fate,
 And mothers held their babes on high,
 The self-devoted chief to see,
 Triumphant over wrong and ill,
 To whom the prattler o'er-said,
 Even the rough soldier's heart was moved,
 As if behind some her beloved,
 With trailing arm, and drooping head,
 The Douglas up the hill he led,
 And at the castle's battled verge,
 With sighs, resigned his hoarded charge.

- 30 The offended Monarch rode away,
 With bitter thought and swelling heart,
 And would not now vouchsafe again
 Through Stirling streets to lead his train
 ' O Lennox, who would wish to rule
 This changeling crowd, this common fool?
 Hear'st thou," he said, " the loud acclaim,
 With which they shout the Douglas' name?
 With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
 Strained for King James their morning note,
 With like acclaim they hailed the day
 When first I broke the Douglas' sway,
 And like acclaim would Douglas grieve,
 If he could hurl me from my seat
 Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
 I antastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?
 Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
 And fickle as a changeful dream,
 Fantastic as a woman's mood,
 And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood —
 Thou many-headed monster-thing,
 O who would wish to be thy king! —
- 31 " But soft! what messenger of speed
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
 I guess his cognizance afar —
 What from our cousin, John of Mai?" —
 " He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
 Within the safe and guarded ground

For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Has summoned his rebellious crew,
 'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
 These loose banditti stand arrayed,
 The Earl of Mai, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster marched, and soon
 Your grace will hear of battle fought,
 But earnestly the Earl besought,
 Till for such danger he provide,
 With scanty train you will not ride

- 32 "Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,
 I should have earlier looked to this
 I lost it in this bustling day
 —Retrace with speed thy former way,
 Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
 The best of mine shall be thy meed
 Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
 We do forbid the intended war,
 Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
 Was made our prisoner by a knight,
 And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws
 The tidings of their leaders lost
 Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
 Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
 For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel
 Bear Mar our message, Braco, fly"—
 He turned his steed,—“My liege, I hie,
 Yet, ere I cross this hilly lawn,
 I fear the broad-swords will be drawn —
 The turf the flying courser spurned,
 And to his towers the King returned

- 33 Ill with King James's mood that day
 Suited gay feast and minstrel lay,
 Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
 And soon cut short the festal song
 Not less upon the saddened town
 The evening sunk in sorrow down,
 The burghers spoke of civil jar,
 Of rumoured feuds and mountain war,
 Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
 All up in arms —the Douglas too,
 They mourned him pent within the hold
 “Where stout Earl William was of old,”
 And there his word the speaker stayed,
 And finger on his lip he laid,
 Or pointed to his dagger blade
 But judged I orsemen, from the west,
 At evening to the castle pressed,

And busy talkers said they bore
 Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore
 At noon the deadly fray begun,
 And lasted till the set of sun
 Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
 Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

THE GUARD ROOM

- 1 The sun, awakening, through the smoky air,
 Of the dark city casts a sullen glare,
 Rousing each cut-throat to his task of care,
 Of sinful men the sad inheritance,
 Summoning revellers from the haggard dance,
 Sealing the prowling robber to his den,
 Gilding on battled tower the waider's lance,
 And warning student pale to leave his pen,
 And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men
 What various scenes, and O! what scenes of woe,
 Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
 The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
 Through crowded hospital beholds its stream,
 The ruined maiden trembles at its glare,
 The debtor wakes to thoughts of gyre and jail,
 The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream,
 The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
 Turns her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail
- 2 At dawn the towers of Stirling ring
 With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
 While drums, with rolling note, foretell
 Relief to weary sentinel
 Through narrow loop and casement barred,
 The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
 And, struggling with the smoky air,
 Darkened the torches' yellow glare
 In comfortless alliance shone
 The lights through arch of blackened stone,
 And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
 Faces deformed with beard and scurf,
 All haggard from the midnight watch,
 And fevered with the stern debauch,
 For the oak table's massive board,
 Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
 And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,
 Showed in what sport the night had flown
 Some, weary, snored on floor and bench,
 Some laboured still their thirst to quench,
 Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands
 O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
 While round them, or beside them slung,
 At every step their harness rung

3. These drew not for their fields the sword.
 Like tenants of a feudal lord,
 Nor owned the patriarchal clum }
 Of chieftain in their leader's name;
 Adventurers they, from far who roved,
 To live by battle which they loved ✓
 Where the Italian's clouded face,
 The swarthy Spaniard's tawny trace;
 The mountain-loving Switzer there
 More freely breathed in mountain air,
 The Fleming there despised the soil
 That paid so ill the labourer's toil,
 Their rolls showed French and German names,
 And merry England's exiles came,
 To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
 Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain
 All brave in aims, well trained to wield
 The heavy halberd, brand, and shield,
 In camps licentious, wild, and bold,
 In pillage, fierce, and uncontrolled,
 And now, by holytide and feast,
 From rules of discipline released

4. They held debate of bloody fray, }
 Fought 'twixt Loch-Katrine and Achray
 Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
 Their hands oft grippled to their swords, /
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
 Of wounded comrades groaning near,
 Whose mangled limbs, and bodies goied,
 Bore token of the mountain sword,
 Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
 Then prayers and feverish wails were heard, —
 Sad burden to the russian joke,
 And savage oath by jury spoke! —
 At length up-started John of Brent,
 A yeoman from the banks of Tient,
 A stranger to respect or fear,
 In peace a chaser of the deer,
 In host a hardy mutineer,
 But still the boldest of the crew,
 When deed of danger was to do
 He grieved, that day their games cut short,
 And marred the dicers' bravling sport,
 And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
 And, while a merry catch I trill,
 Let each the buxom chorus begin,
 Like brethren of the brand and spear" — ✓

SOLDIER'S SONG

5. Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
 Laid a swingeing long curse on the bony brown bon ✓
 That there's wrath and despair in the jolly blat blat

And seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack,
 Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor!
Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dew lip,
 Says, that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black
 Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!
 Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot,
 And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our good mother Church
 Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
 Sweet Margorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

- 6 The warder's challenge, heard without,
 Stayed in mid roar the merry shout
 A soldier to the portal went,—
 "Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent,
 And, best for jubilee the drum!
 A mud and minstrel with him come"—
 Bertram, a Fleming, gray, and scarred,
 Was entering now the Court of Guard,
 A harper with him, and, in plaid
 All muffled close, a mountain maid,
 Who backward shrank to 'scape the view
 Of the loose scene and boisterous crew
 "What news?" they roared—"I only know
 From noon till eve we fought with foe
 As wild and as untameable
 As the rude mountains where they dwell
 On both sides store of blood is lost,
 Nor much success can either boast"—
 "But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
 As theirs must needs reward thy toil
 O! dost thou war, and wars grow sharp,
 Thou now hast glaze maiden and harp,
 Get thee an ape, and tudge the land,
 The leader of a juggler band"—

- 7 "No, comrade,—no such fortune mine
 After the fight, these sought our line,
 That aged harper and the girl,
 And, living audience of the Earl,
 Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
 And bring them hitherward with speed.
 Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
 For none shall do them shame or harm"—
 "Here ye his boast!" cried John of Brent,
 Ever to strife and jangling bent,—
 "Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
 And yet the jealous regard grudge

To pay the forester his fee?
 I'll have my share howe'er it be,
 Despite of Moray, Mar or thee!—
 Beltram his forward step withstood;
 And burning in his vengeful mood,
 Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
 Laid hand upon his dagger knife,
 But Ellen boldly stepped between,
 And dropped at once the tartan screen—
 So, from his morning cloud, appears
 The sun of May, through summer tears.
 The savage soldiery, amazed,
 As on descended angel gazed,
 Even hurdy Brent, abashed and tamed,
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed

- 8 Boldly she spoke,—‘Soldiers, attend!
 My father was the soldier's friend,
Cheered him in camps, in marches led,
 And with him in the battle bled
 Not from the valiant, or the strong,
 Should evil's daughter suffer wrong!’—
 Answered De Brent most forward still
 In every feat of good or ill,
 “I shame me of the part I played
 And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
 An outlaw I by Forest laws,
 And merry Needwood knows the cause
 Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,”—
 He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
 “Must bear such age, I think, as thou—
 Hear ye, my mates,—I go to call
 The Captain of our watch to hall
 There lies my halbert on the floor,
 And he that steps my halbert o'er,
 To do the mad injurious part,
 My shaft shall quiver in his heart!
 Beware loose speech, or jesting rough;
 Ye'll know John de Brent Enough!”

- 9 Then Captain came, a gallant young —
 (Of Tullibardine's house he sprung)
 Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight
 Gay was his mien, his humour light,
 And though by courtesy controlled
 Forward his speech, his bearing bold
 The high-born maiden ill could brook
 The scanning of his curious look
 And dauntless eye,—and yet, in sooth,
 Young Lewis was a generous youth,
 But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
 Ill-suited to the garb and scene,
 Might lightly bear construction strange;

And give loose fancy scope to range /
 —“Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
 Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
 On palfrey white, with hauper hoar,
 Like errant damosel of yore?
 Does thy high quest a knight require,
 Or may the venture suit a squire?”—
 Her dark eye flashed,—she pruned and sighed,
 “O what have I to do with pride!
 Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
 A suppliant for a father's life,
 I crave an audience of the King
 Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
 The royal pledge of grateful claims,
 Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James”

- 10 The signet ring young Lewis took,
 With deep respect and altered look,
 And said,—“This ring our duties own,
And pardon, if, to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,
 Lady, in aught my folly failed
 Soon as the day flings wide his gates, /
 The King shall know what suitor waits
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting hour,
Repose you till his waking hour,
Female attendance shall obey
Your best, for service or may
Permit I marshal you the way” —
 But, ere she followed, with the grace
 And open bounty of her rice, †
 She bade her slender purse be shared
 Among the soldiers of the guard
 The rest with thanks their guerdon took,
 But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
 On the reluctant maiden's hold
 Forced bluntly back the proffered gold,—
 “Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part!
 The vacant purse shall be my share,
 Which in my burret-cap I'll bear,
 Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
 Where grayer crests in ay keep far” —
 With thanks,—’twas all she could,—the maid
 His rugged courtesy repaid

- 11 When Ellen forth with Lewis went
 Allan made suit to John of Bient —
 “My lady wife, oh let your grace
 Give me to see my master's race,
 His minstrel I,—to share his doom
 Bound from the cradle to the tomb
Tenth in descent, & vice first my” —

Waked for his noble house then lyies,
 Nor one of all the race was known
 But prized its weal above their own
 With the Chief's birth begins our crie,
 Our heart must soothe the infant heir,
 Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
 His earliest feat of field or chase,
 In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse,
 A doleful tribute 'o'er his hearse
 Then let me share his captive lot,
 It is my right,—deny it not!—
 "Little we reck," said John of Brent,
 "We Southern men, of long descent;
 Nor wot we how a name—a word—
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord
 Yet kind my noble landlord's part,—
 God bless the house of Berudesert!
 And, but I loved to drive the deer,
 More than to guide the labouring steer,
 I had not dwelt an outcast here
 Come, good old Minstrel, follow me,
 Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."—

82. Then, from a rusted iron hook,
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led
 Through grated arch and passage dread
 Portals they passed, where, deep within,
 Spoke prisoner's moan and fetters' din,
 Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored
 Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
 And many an hideous engine grim,
 For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
 By artists formed, who deemed it shame
 And sin to give their work a name
 They halted at a low-blowed porch,
 And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
 While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
 And made the bar unhasp its hold
 They entered —'twas a prison-room
 Of stern security and gloom,
 Yet not a dungeon, for the day
 Through lofty gratings found its way,
 And rude and antique furniture
 Decked the sad walls and oaken floor,
 Such as the rugged days of old
 Deemed fit for captive noble's hold
 "Here," said De Brent, "thou must remain;
 Till the Leech visit him again
 Strict is his charge, the warders tell,

To tend the noble prisoner well"—
 Ketting then, the bolt he drew,
 And the lock's murmurs grow'd more
 Roused at the sound, from low he led
 A captive softly raised his head,
 The wondering Minstrel look'd, and new
 Not his den lord, but Roderick Dhu!
 For, come from where Clun-Alpine sought,
 They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought

- 13 As the tall ship, whose lofty prow
 Shall never stem the billows more,
 Deserted by her gallant band,
 Amid the breakers lies a-strind,—
 So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
 And oft his severed limbs he threw
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides
 Lie rocking in the advancing tide,
 That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
 Yet cannot heave her from her seat,—
 O! how unlike her course on sea!
 Or his free step on lull and lee!
 Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
 —'What of thy lady?—of my clan?
 My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all!
 Have they been ruined in my fall?
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
 Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear
 (For Allan, who his mood well knew,
 Was choked with grief and terror too)
 "Who fought?—who fled?—Old man, be brief—
 Some might—for they had lost their Chief!
 Who basely live?—who bravely died?"—
 "O, calm thee, Chief!" the Minstrel cried.
 "Ellen is safe,"—"For that, thank Heaven!"—
 "And hopes are for the Douglas given,
 The Lady Margaret too is well,
 And for thy clan,—on field or fell,
 Has never harp of minstrel told
 Of combat fought so true and bold
 Thy stately pine is yet unbent,
 Though many a goodly bough is rent"

- 14 The Chieftun reared his form on high,
 And fever's fire was in his eye,
 But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
 Chequered his swarthy brow and cheeks
 —"Hail, Minstrel! I have heard thee play
 With measure bold on festal day,
 In yon lone isle, again where ne'er
 Shall harper play, or warrior hear,
 That stirring air that peals on high
 O'er Dermid's race our victory—

Strike it'—and then, (for well thou canst,)
 Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced, |
 Flung me the picture of the sight,
 When met my cl in the Saxon might
 I'll listen, till my fanc, hears
 The clang of swords the crash of spears'
 These grates, these walls, shall vanish then |
 For the fair field of fighting men,
 And my free spirit burst away, |
 As if it soared from battle fray " |
 The trembling bard with awe obeyed,—
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid,
 But soon remembrance of the sight
 He witnessed from the mountain's height.
 With what old Bertram told at night,
 Awakened the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along,—
 As shallop launched on river's tide,
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,
 But, when it feels the middle stream,
 Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

BATTLE OF BEN-AN-DUINE

- 15 "The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Ben-venue,
 For, ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch-Achray—
 Where shall he find, in foreign land
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand'—
 There is no breeze upon the fern,
 No ripple on the lake,
 Upon her eyrie nods the erne,
 The deer has sought the brake;
 The small birds will not sing aloud
 The springing trout lies still,
 So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,
 That swatches, as with a purple shroud,
 Benedi's distant hill
 Is the thunder's solemn sound
 That mutters deep and dread,
 Or echoes from the growing ground |
 The warrior's measured tread? |
 Is it the lightning's quivering glance |
 That on the thicket streams, |
 Or do they flash on spear and lance,
 The sun's retiring beams?
 —I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
 I see the Morav's silver star,
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war
 That up the lake comes winding far! |
 To hero bounè for battle strife,
 Or band of mutual lay,

'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
 One glance at their array'

- 16 ' Their light-armed archers far and near
 Surveyed the tangled ground,
 Their centre ranks with pike and spear
 A twilight forest frowned, /
 Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
 The stern battalions crowded /
 No cymbal clashed, no claxon ring,
 Still were the pipe and drum,
 Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
 The sullen march was dumb
 There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
 Or wave their flags abroad,
 Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,
 That shadowed o'er their road.
 Their vanguard scouts no tidings bring,
 Can rouse no lurking foe,
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,
 Save when they stirred the roe;
 'The host moves, like a deep sea-wave
 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave.
 High swelling, dark, and slow
 The lake is passed, and now they gain
 A narrow and a broken plain,
 Before the Trosach's rugged jaws, /
 And here the horse and spear-men pause,
 While, to explore the dangerous glen,
 Dive through the pass the archer men

- 17 " At once there rose so wild a yell
 Within that dark and narrow dell,
 As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
 Had perled the banner-cry of hell!
 Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
 Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
 The archery appear
 For life! for life! then flight they ply—
 And shriek, and shout, and battle cry,
 And pluds and bonnets waving high,
 And broad-swords flashing to the sky,
 Are maddening in their rear
 Onward they drive in dreadful race,
 Pursuers and pursued,
 Before that tide of flight and chase,
 How shall it keep its rooted place,
 The spearmen's twilight wood?
 'Down down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
 Bear back both friend and foe!
 Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
 That serried grove of lances brown
 At once lay levelled low,

And closely shouldering side to side,
 The bristling ranks the onset bide —
 — 'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
 As their Tinchel crows the game!
 They come as fleet as forest deer,
 We'll drive them back as tame' —

18. "Beating before them, in their course,
 The relics of the archer force,
 Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
 Right onward did Clan-Alpine come
 Above the tide, each broad-sword bright
 Was brandishing like beam of light,
 Each targe was dark below,
 And with the ocean's mighty swing,
 When heaving to the tempest's wing,
 They haled them on the foe
 I heard the lance's shivering crash,
 As when the whirlwind reids the ash,
 I heard the broad-sword's deadly clang,
 As if a hundred anvils rang!
 But Moray wheeled his rear-ward rank
 Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank,
 — 'My banner-man, advance!
 I see,' he cried, 'their column shake
 Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
 Upon them with the lance!' —
 The horsemen dashed among the rout,
 As deer break through the broom,
 Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
 They soon make lightsome room!
 Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne, —
 Where, where, was Roderick then!
 One blast upon his bugle horn
 Were worth a thousand men
 And refluent through the pass of fear/
 The battle's tide was poured,
 Turned the Saxon's struggling spear,
 Vanished the mountain sword
 As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
 Receives her roaring linn,
 As the dark caverns of the deep
 Suck the wild whirlpool in,
 So did the deep and darksome pass
 Devour the battle's mingled mass,
 None linger now upon the plain,
 Save those who ne'er shall fight again.
19. "Now westward rolls the battle's din,
 That deep and doubling pass within
 Minstrel, away! the work of fate
 Is bearing on its issue wait,
 Where the rude Tiosach's diad defile

Opens on Katrine's lake and isle /
 Gray Ben-venue I soon repass'd,
 Loch-Katrine lay beneath me cast.
 The sun is set, the clouds are met,
 The lowering scowl of heaven
 An inky hue of livid blue,
 To the deep lake has given,
 Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
 Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen,
 I heeded not the eddying surge,
 Mine eye but saw the Trosach's gorge,
 Mine ear but heard that sullen sound
 Which like an earthquake shook the grou
 And spoke the stern and desperate strife
 That parts not but with parting life,
 Seeming, to minstrel-err, to toll
 The dirge of many a passing soul
 Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen,
 The martial flood disgorged agen,
 But not in mingled tide,
 The plaided warriors of the North
 High on the mountain thunder forth,
 And overhang its side,
 While by the lake below appears
 The darkening cloud of Saxon spears /
 At weiry bry each shattered band,
 Eyng their foemen, sternly stand,
 Their bidders stream like tattered sail,
 That flings its fragments to the gale,
 And broken arms and disarray
 Marked the fell havoc of the day

- 20 "Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
 The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
 Till Moray pointed with his lance,
 And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
 See! none are left to guard its strand,
 But women weak, that wring the hand—
 'Tis there of yore the robber band
 Their booty went to pile —
 My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
 To him will swim a bow shot o'er,
 And loose a shallop from the shore
 Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
 Lords of his mate, and blood, and den'—
 Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung
 On earth his cask and corslet rung,
 He plunged him in the wave —
 All saw the deed—the purpose knew
 And to their clamours Ben-venue
 A mingled echo gave,
 The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer.

The helpless females scream for fear,
 And yell for rage the mountaineer
 'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
 Poured down at once the lowering heaven,
 A whirlwind swept Loch-Katrine's breast,
 Her billows reared their snowy crest
 Well for the swimmer swelled they high,
 To mar the Highland marksman's eye,
 For round him showered, 'mid rain and hail,
 The vengeful arrows of the Gael —
 In vain — He nears the isle — and lo!
 His hand is on a shallop's bow
 — Just then a flash of lightning came,
 It tinged the waves and strand with flame,
 I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame,
 Behind an oak I saw her stand,
 A naked dirk gleamed in her hand —
 It darkened, — but amid the moan
 Of waves I heard a dying groan, —
 Another flash! — the spearman floats
 A weltering corse beside the boats,
 And the stern Matron o'er him stood,
 Her hand and dagger streaming blood

" 'Revenge! revenge!' the Saxons cried,
 The Gaels' exulting shout replied —
 Despite the elemental rage,
 Again they hurried to engage,
 But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
 Bloody with spurring came a knight,
 Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
 Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag
 Clarion and trumpet by his side
 Rang forth a truce-note high and wide,
 While, in the monarch's name, afar
 A herald's voice forbade the war,
 For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
 Were both, he said, in captive hold —
 — But here the lay made sudden stand,
 The harp escaped the minstrel's hand —
 Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
 How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy.
 At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
 With lifted hand, kept feeble time,
 That motion ceased — yet feeling strong
 Varied his look as changed the song.
 At length, no more his deafened ear
 The minstrel melody can hear.
 His face grows sharp, — his hands are clenched,
 As if some pang his heart strings wrenched,
 Set are his teeth, — his fiding eye
 Is sternly fixed on vacancy

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

Thus, motionless and motionless, drew
His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu —
Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit pass'd,
But when he saw that life was fled
He poured his wailing o'er the dead

LAMENT

- 22 “And art thou cold, and lonely laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
Bredalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade?
For thee shall none a requiem say —
For thee, who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line —
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wait for Alpine's honoured pine.”

“What groans shall vnder valleys fill,
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill,
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not champion of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine —
O woe for Alpine's honoured pine.”

“Sad was thy lot on mortal stage —
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain,
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured pine.”

- 23 Tllen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart,
Where played, with many-coloured gleams
Through storied pine the rising beams
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lightened up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray,
Or, if she looked, 'twas but to say,
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where lived on high
The dun deer's hide for canopy,
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,

While Lusia, crouching by her side,
 Her station claimed with jealous pride,
 And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
 Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
 Whose answer, oft at random made,
 The wandering of his thoughts betrayed ✓
 Those who such simple joys have known
 Are taught to prize them when they're gone
 But sudden, see, she lifts her head !
 The window seeks with cautious tread
 What distant music has the power
 To win her in this woeful hour !
 'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
 Her latticed bowel, the strain was sung

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
 My idle greyhound loathes his food,
 My horse is weary of his stall,
 And I am sick of captive thrall
 I wish I were as I have been,
 Hunting the hart in forests green,
 With bended bow and bloodhound free,
 For that's the life is meet for me,
 "I hate to learn the ebb of time
 From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
 Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
 Inch after inch, along the wall
 The lark was wont my matins ring,
 The sabbath took my vespers sing,
 These towers, although a king's they be,
 Have not a hall of joy for me

"No more at dawning morn I rise,
 And sun myself in Ellen's eyes, ✓
 Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
 And homeward wend with evening dew;
 A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
 And lay my trophies at her feet,
 While fled the eve on wing of glee,
 That life is lost to love and me !"

5 The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
 The listener had not turned her head,
 It trickled still, the starting tear,
 When light a footstep struck her ear,
 And Snowdon's graceful Knight was near.
 She turned the haster, lest again
 The prisoner should renew his strain
 "O welcome, brave Fitz-James !" she said
 "How may an almost orphan maid
 Pay the deep debt"—"O say not so !
 To me no gratitude you owe
 Not mine, alas ! the boon to give. !

And bid thy noble father live, /
 I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
 With Scotland's King thy suit to aid /
 No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lead his better mood aside
 Come, Ellen, come!—'tis more than time,
 He holds his court at morning prime—
 With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
 As to a brother's arm she clung
 Gently he dried the falling tear,
 And gently whispered hope and cheer,
 Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
 Through gallery fair and high arcade,
 Till, at his touch, its wings of pride /
 A portal arch unfolded wide

6 Within 'twas brilliant all and light, /
 A thronging scene of figures bright; /
 It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
 As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
 And, from their tissue, fancy frames
 Aerial knights and fairy dames
 Still by Fitz-James her footing stayed, /
 A few faint steps she forward made,
 Then slow her drooping head she raised.
 And fearful round the presence gazed,
 For him she sought, who owned this state,
 The dreaded prince whose will was fate—
 She gazed on many a princely port, she
 Might well have ruled a royal court,
 On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
 Then turned bewildered and amazed,
 For all stood bare, and, in the room,
 Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume
 To him each lady's look was lent, /
 On him each courtier's eye was bent,
 'Midst furs, and silks, and jewels sheen,
 He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
 The centre of the glittering ring,—
 And Snowdon's Knight is Scotland's King!

27 As wreath of snow on mountain breast, /
 Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
 Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
 And at the Monarch's feet she lay,
 No word her choking voice commands,—
 She showed the ring,—she clasped her hands
 Oh! not a moment could he brook,
 The generous prince, that suppliant look!
 Gently he raised her—and the while
 Checked with a glance the circle's smile
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,

And bade her terrors be dismissed, —
 “Yes, I am, the wandering poor Fitz-James
 The fertility of Scotland claims
 To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
 He will redeem his signet ring /
 Ask nought for Douglas, — yester even,
 His prince and he have much forgiven
 Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue, /
 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong
 We would not to the vulgar crowd
 Yield what they craved with clamour loud, —
 Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
 Our council aided and our laws /
 I stanch'd thy father's death-tend stern
 With stout De Vaux and gray Glencurn,
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
 The friend and bulwark of our Throne — —
 But, lovely infidel, how now?
 What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid:
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid” —

- 28 Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
 And on his neck his daughter hung
 The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
 The sweetest, holiest draught of Power, +
 When it can say, with godlike voice,
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice! ✓
 Yet would not James the general eye
 On nature's raptures long should pry. /
 He stepped between — “Nay, Douglas, nay,
 Steal not my proselyte away
 The riddle 'tis my right to read
 That brought this happy chance to speed —
 Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray,
 In life's more low but happier way,
 'Tis under name which veils my power, 1552 1553
 Nor falsely veils — for Stirling's tower
 Of joy the name of Snowdon claims,
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
 Thus learn to right the injured cause” — +
 Then, in a tone apart and low,
 — “Ah! little traitress! none must know
 What idle dream, what lighter thought,
 What vanity full dearly bought,
 Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Ben-venue,
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave
 Thy monarch's life to mountain glave!” —
 Aloud he spoke — “Thou still dost hold
 That little talisman of gold,

- Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
 'What seeks fur Ellen of the King?'
- 29 Full well the conscious maiden guessed
 He probed the weakness of her bierst,
 But, with that consciousness, there came
 A lightening of her fears for Grame,
 And more she deemed the Monarch's ire /
 Kindled 'gainst him who, for her sire,
 Rebellious broad-sword boldly drew,
 And to her generous feeling true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu—
 "Forbear thy suit—the King of Kings
 Alone can stay life's prying wings,
 I know his heart, I know his hand,
 Have shamed his cheer, and proved his brand,—
 My fairest earldom would I give
 To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!
 Hast thou no other boon to crave?
 No other captive friend to save?"—
 Blushing, she turned her from the King,
 And to the Douglas gave the ring,
 As if she wished her sue to speak
 The suit that stained her glowing cheek—
 "Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
 And stubborn justice holds her course
 Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at the word,
 Down kneeled the Grème to Scotland's Lord
 "For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
 From thee my Vengeance claim her ducs,
 Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
 Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
 And sought amid thy faithful clan
 A refuge for an outlawed man,
 Dishonouring thus thy loyal name—
 Fetter and woe for the Grème!"—
 His clasp of gold the King unstung,
 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
 Then gently drew the glittering band,
 And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand

Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
 On purple peaks a deeper shade descending,
 In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
 The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending
 Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
 And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy,
 Thy numbers sweet with Nature's vespers blending,
 With distant echo from the fold and lea,
 And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee
 Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!
 Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,

And little reck I of the censure sharp /
 May idly cavil at an idle lay
 Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
 Though secret woes the world has never known, /
 When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
 And bitterer was the grief devoured alone
 That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own. \

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
 Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
 'Tis now a Seraph bold, with touch of fire, \
 'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing \
 Receding now, the dying numbers ring
 Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
 And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
 A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
 And now, 'tis silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!





THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

"Quid dignum memorare tuus, Hispania, turris,
Vox humana valet!"—CLAUDIUS

TO

JOHN WHITMORE, ESQ.,

AND TO THE

COMMITTEE OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR BIRTH OF THE PORTUGUESE
SUFFRAGES, IN WHICH HE PRESENTS,

THIS POEM,

COMPOSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND UNDER THEIR
MANAGEMENT, IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

WALTER SCOTT

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION, 1814.

THE following Poem is founded upon a Spanish Tradition, particularly detailed in the Notes but bearing, in general, that Don Roderick, the last Gothic King of Spain, when the Invasion of the Moors was impending, had the temerity to descend into an ancient vault near Toledo, the opening of which had been denounced as fatal to the Spanish monarchy. The legends add, that his rash curiosity was mortified by an emblematical representation of those Saracens who, in the year 714, defeated him in battle, and reduced Spain under their dominion. I have presumed to prolong the Vision of the Revolutions of Spain down to the present eventful crisis of the Peninsula and to divide it, by a supposed change of scene, into THREE PERIODS. The FIRST of these represents the Invasion of the Moor, the Defeat and Death of Roderick, and closes with the peaceful occupation of the country by the Victors. The SECOND PERIOD embraces the state of the Peninsula, when the conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the East and West Indies had raised to the highest pitch the renown of their arms sullied, however, by superstition and cruelty. An allusion to the inhumanities of the Inquisition terminates this picture. The THIRD PART of the Poem opens with the state of Spain previous to the unparalleled treachery of BUONAPARTE gives a sketch of the usurpation attempted upon that unsuspecting and friendly kingdom, and terminates with the arrival of the British succours. It may be farther proper to mention, that the object of the Poem is less to commemorate or detail particular incidents, than to exhibit a general and impressive picture of the several periods brought upon the stage.

I am too sensible of the respect due to the Public, especially by one who has already experienced more than ordinary indulgence, to offer any apology for the inferiority of the poetry to the subject it is chiefly designed to commemorate. Yet I think it proper to mention that, while I was hastily executing a work, written for a temporary purpose, and on pressing events, the task was most cruelly interrupted by the successive deaths of Lord President BATHURST, and Lord Viscount MELVILLE. In those distinguished characters, I had not only to regret persons whose lives were most important to Scotland, but also whose notice and patronage honoured my entrance upon active life, and I may add, with melancholy pride, who permitted my more advanced age to claim no common share in their friendship. Under such interruptions, the following verses, which my best and happiest efforts must have left far unworthy of their theme, have, I am myself sensible, an appearance of negligence and incoherence, which, in other circumstances, I might have been able to remove.

EDINBURGH, June 24th, 1811

INTRODUCTION

- 1 LIVES there a strain whose sounds of mounting fire
 May rise distinguished o'er the din of war,
 Or died it with yon Master of the Lyre,
 Who sung beleagu'ring Ilion's evil star?
 Such, WELLINGTON, might reach thee from afar,
 Wafting its descent wide o'er Ocean's range,
 Nor shouts, nor clashing arms, its mood could mar,
 All as it swelled 'twixt each loud trumpet charge,
 That clangs to Britain, victory, to Portugal, revenge!
- 2 Yes! such a strain, with all-omnipotent measure,
 Might melodize with each tumultuous sound,
 Each voice of fear or triumph, woe or pleasure,
 That rings Mondego's ravaged shores around,
 The thundering cry of hosts with conquest crowned,
 The female shriek, the ruined peasant's moan,
 The shout of captives from their chains unbound,
 The foiled oppressor's deep and sullen groan,
 A Nation's choral hymn for tyranny o'erthrown
- 3 But we, weak minstrels of a lagging day,
 Skilled but to imitate an elder page,
 Timid and raptureless, can we repay
 The debt thou claim'st in this exhausted age?
 Thou givest our lyres a theme that might engage
 Those that could send thy name o'er sea and land,
 While sea and land shall last, for Homer's rage
 A theme, a theme for Milton's mighty hand—
 How much unmeet for us, a faint degenerate band!
- 4 Ye mountains stern! within whose rugged breast
 The friends of Scottish freedom found repose,
 Ye torrents! whose hoarse sounds have soothed them rest
 Returning from the field of vanquished foes
 Say, have ye lost each wild majestic close,
 That erst the choir of birds or Druids sung,
 What time their hymn of victory rose,
 And Cuthbert's glens with voice of triumph rung,
 And mystic Merlin harped, and gray-haired Iona sung?

- 5 O! if your wilds such minstrelsy retain,
 As sure your changeful gales seem oft to cry,
 When sweeping wild and sinking soft again,
 Like trumpet jubilee, or harp's wild sway;
 If ye can echo such triumphant lay,
 Then lend the note to him his loved you long!
 Who pious gathered each tradition gray
 That floats your solitary wastes along,
 And with affection vain gave them new voice in song
- 6 For not till now, how oft so'er the task
 Of truant verse hath lightened graver care,
 From muse or sylvan was he wont to ask,
 In phrase poetic, inspiration fur,
 Careless he gave his numbers to the air,—
 They came unsought for, if applauses came;
 Nor for himself prefers he now the prayer;
 Let but his verse besit a hero's fame,
 Immortal be the verse!—forgot the poet's name
- 7 Haik, from yon misty cairn their answer tossed
 "Minstrel! the fame of whose romantic lyre,
 Capricious swelling now, may soon be lost,
 Like the light flickering of a cottage fire,
 If to such task presumptuous thou aspire,
 Seek not from us the meed to warrior due
 Age after age has gathered son to sire,
 Since our gray cliffs the din of conflict knew,
 Or, peeling through our vales, victorious bugles blew
- 8 "Decayed our old traditionary lore,
 Save where the lingering fays renew their ring,
 By mill rind seen beneath the hawthorn horn,
 Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted spring,
 Save where their legends gray-haired shepherds sing,
 That now scarce win a listening ear but thine,
 Of feuds obscure, and Border ravaging,
 And rugged deeds recount in rugged line,
 Of moonlight foray made on Teviot, Tweed, or Tyne
- 9 "No! search romantic lands, where the near sun
 Gives with unstinted boon ethereal flame,
 Where the rude villager, his labour done,
 In verse spontaneous chants some favoured name.
 Whether Olrik's charms his tribute claim,
 Her eye of diamond, and her locks of jet,
 Or whether, kindling at the deeds of Græme,
 He sing, to wild Morisco measure set,
 Old Albin's red chymore, green Erin's bayonet
- 10 "Explore those regions where the flinty crest
 Of wild Nevada ever gleams with snows,
 Where in the proud Alhambra's ruined breast
 Barbaric monuments of nomp repose,

Or where the banners of more ruthless foes
 Than the fierce Moor float o'er Toledo's fane,
 From whose tall towers even now the patriot throws
 An anxious glance, to spy upon the plain
 The blended ranks of England, Portugal, and Spain

- 11 "There, of Numantian fire a swarthy spark
 Still lightens in the sun-burnt native's eye,
 The stately port, slow step, and visage dark,
 Still mark enduring pride and constancy
 And, if the glow of feudal chivalry
 Beam not, as once, thy nobles' dearest pride,
 There 't oft thy crestless peasantry
 Have seen the plumed Hidalgo quit their side,
 Have seen, yet dauntless stood—'gainst fortune fought and
 died

- 12 "And cherished still by that unchanging race
 Are themes for minstrelsy more high than thine,
 Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
 Legend and vision, prophecy and sign,
 Where wonders wild of Arabesque combine
 With Gothic imagery of darker shade,
 Forming a model meet for minstrel line
 Go, seek such theme!"—the Mountain Spirit said
 With filial awe I heard—I heard, and I obeyed

THE VISION

- 1 Rearing their crests amid the cloudless skies,
 And darkly clustering in the pale moonlight,
 Toledo's holy towers and spires arise,
 As from a trembling lake of silver white,
 Their mingled shadows intercept the sight
 Of the broad burial-ground outstretched below,
 And nought disturbs the silence of the night,
 All sleeps in sullen shade or silver glow,
 All save the heavy swell of Teio's ceaseless flow
- 2 All save the rushing swell of Teio's tide,
 Or, distant heard, a courser's neigh or tramp,
 Their changing rounds as watchful horsemen ride
 To guard the limits of King Roderick's camp
 For, through the river's night-fog rolling damp,
 Was many a proud pavilion dimly seen,
 Which glimmered back, against the moon's far lamp,
 Tissues of silk and silver twisted sheen,
 And standards proudly pitched, and warders armed between
- 3 But of then Monarch's person keeping ward,
 Since last the deep-mouthed bell of vespers tolled
 The chosen soldiers of the royal guard
 Their post beneath the proud Cathedral hold
 A band unlike their Gothic sires of old,

Who, for the cry of steel and iron hoars,
 Pear slender dart, or lancesque, the world's eld with fear;
 While silver studded belts their shield encircle
 Where ivory quivers ring in the broad falchion's place

- 4 In the light language of an idle court,
 They murmured at their mother's holy duty,
 And held his leathern lion on a myrmidon —
 "What! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
 To wear in shirt and prayer the empire's crown?
 And are his hours in such an ill purchase paid
 For fair Florinda's plundered crown to pay?" —
 Then to the east their heavy eyes they cast,
 And wished the lingering dawn would plimmer forth at last.

- 5 But, far within Toledo's Prelate bent
 An ear of fearful wonder to the king,
 The silver lamp a fitful lustre sent,
 So long that sad confession wither'd —
 For Roderick told of many a hidden thing,
 Such as are lothly uttered to the ear,
 When Fear, Remorse, and Shame, the barren war,
 And Guilt his secret burthen cannot bear
 And Conscience seeks in speech a respite from Deceit.

- 6 Full on the Prelate's face, and silver hair,
 The stream of fading light was feebly rolled;
 But Roderick's visage, though his head was bare,
 Was shadowed by his hand and mantle's fold
 While of his hidden soul the sins he told,
 Proud Alric's descendant could not brook
 That mortal man his bearing should behold
 Or boast that he had seen, when conscience heaved,
 Fear time a monarch's brow, remorse a warrior's lord.

- 7 The old man's faded cheek waxed yet more pale
 As many a secret sad the king betrayed,
 And sign and glance eld out the unfinished tale,
 When in the midst his faltering whisper staid —
 "Thus royal Witiza was slain," — he said,
 "Yet, holy father, deem not it was I" —
 Thus still Ambition strives her crimes to shade —
 "O rather deem 'twas stern necessity,
 Self-preservation bade, and I must kill or die

- 8 "And, if Florinda's shrieks alarmed the air
 If she invoked her absent sire in vain,
 And on her knees implored that I would spare,
 Yet, reverend priest, thy sentence rash refrain! —
 All is not as it seems — the female train
 Know by their bearing to disguise their mood" —
 But Conscience here, as if in high disdain,
 Sent to the Monarch's cheek the burning blood —
 He stayed his speech abrupt — and up the Prelate stood

- 9 "O hardened offspring of an iron race!
 What of thy crimes, Don Roderick shall I say,
 What alms, or prayers, or penance can efface
 Murder's dark spot, wash treason's stain away!
 For the foul ravisher how shall I pray,
 Who, scarce repentant, makes his crime his boast?
 How hope Almighty vengeance shall delay,
 Unless, in mercy to yon Christian host,
 He spare the shepherd, lest the guiltless sheep be lost' —
- 10 Then kindled the dark Tyrant in his mood,
 And to his brow returned its duntless gloom,
 "And welcome then," he cried, "be blood for blood,
 For treason treachery, for dishonour doom!
 Yet will I know whence come they, or by whom
 Show, for thou canst—give forth the fated key,
 And guide me, Priest, to that mysterious room,
 Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
 His nation's future fates a Spanish King shall see' —
- 11 "Ill-fated Prince! recall the desperate word,
 Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!
 Bethink, yon spell-bound portal would afford
 Never to former Monarch entrance-way,
 Nor shall it ever ope, old records say,
 Save to a King, the last of all his line,
 What time his empire totters to decay,
 And treason digs, beneath, her fatal mine,
 And, high above, impends avenging wrath divine' —
- 12 —"Prelate! a Monarch's fate brooks no delay!
 Lead on!"—The ponderous key the old man took
 And held the winking lamp, and led the way
 By winding stair dark aisle, and secret nook
 Then on an ancient gateway bent his look,
 And, as the key the desperate King essayed,
 Low muttered thunders the Cathedral shook,
 And twice he stopped, and twice new effort made
 Till the huge bolts rolled back, and the loud hinges braced
- 13 Long, large, and lofty was that vaulted hall
 Roof, walls, and floor, were all of marble stone,
 Of polished marble, black as funeral pall,
 Carved o'er with signs and characters unknown
 A pale light, as of the dawning, shone
 Through the sad bounds, but whence they could not spy
 For window to the upper air was none,
 Yet by that light, Don Roderick could descry
 Wonders that ne'er till then were seen by mortal eye
- 14 Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
 Of molten bronze, two Statues held their place,
 Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
 Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace

Moulded they seemed for king of most race
 That lived and smelt the *exquisite* food,
 This grasp'd a sceptre, that rested on a sword,
 This spread his wings for flight, that put his feet
 Each stubborn seemed a stern, in battle of mind.

- 15 Fixed was the right-hand Giant's heavy look
 Upon his brother's face of *dim* sun
 As if its ebb he measured by a clock,
 Whose iron volume load'd his forehead,
 In which was writ of many a *prophecy*,
 Of empires lost, and long to *redeem*
 And o'er that put their names in *colossal*
 "Lo, DISTINY and FATE to whom be, He
 The guidance of the earth is for a *season* given —
- 16 Even while they read the sand glaz'd away,
 And, as the last and lagging grains *did* green,
 That right-hand Giant gain his *clasp* up
 As one that tumbles from a *leaky* steep
 Full on the upper wall the *mace's* sweep
 At once descended with the force of *thunder*
 And hurling down at once in *crumpled* leap,
 The marble boundary *was* rent *asunder*
 And gave to Roderick's view new sights of *feared* *world*
- 17 For they might spy, beyond that mighty *green*,
 Realms as of Spain in *visioned* prospect *rich*,
 Castles and towers, in due proportion *each*
 As by some skilful artist's land *portrayed*.
 Here, crossed by many a wild Sierra's *shade*,
 And boundless plains that tire the traveller's *eye*,
 There, rich with vineyard and with olive *glade*,
 Or deep embrowned by forests huge and *high*,
 Or washed by mighty streams, that slowly *murmured* by
- 18 And here, as eist upon the antique stage
 Passed forth the bands of *masquers* *truly* led,
 In various forms, and various *equipage*,
 While fitting strains the *hearer's* fancy *fed*,
 So, to sad Roderick's eye in order *spread*,
 Successive pageants filled that *mystic* scene,
 Showing the fate of battles ere they *bled*,
 And issue of events that had not *been*,
 And ever and anon strange sounds were heard *between*.
- 19 First shrilled an unreported female *shriek* —
 It seemed as if Don Roderick knew the *call*,
 For the bold blood was blanching in his *check* —
 Then answered kettle drum and *tabal*,
 Gong-peal and cymbal clink the ear *appal*,
 The Teebir war-cry, and the *Lehe's* yell,
 Ring wildly dissonant along the *hall*
 Needs not to Roderick their dread import *tell* —
 "The Moor!" he cried, "the Moor! — ring out the *Tocsin* *bel*

- 20 ' They come ! they come ! I see the groaning lands
 White with the turbans of each Arab horde,
 Swait Zarah joins her misbelieving bands,
 All and Mahomet then battle-word,
 The choice they yield the Koran or the sword —
 See how the Christians rush to arms amain ! —
 In yonder shout the voice of conflict roared,
 The shadowy hosts are closing on the plain —
 Now, God and St Iago strike for the good cause of Spain
- 21 By heaven, the Moors prevail ! the Christians yield ! —
 Their coward leader gives for flight the sign !
 The sceptred coven mounts to quit the field —
 Is not yon steed Orelia ? — Yes, 'tis mine
 But never was she turned from battle line,
 Lo ! where the recreant spurs o'er stock and stone ! —
 Curses pursue the slave and wrath divine !
 Rivers engulf him ! — " Hush," in shuddering tone,
 The Pielte said, " rash Prince, yon visioned form's thine
 own " —
22. Just then, a torrent crossed the fier's course,
 The dangerous ford the Kingly Likeness tried,
 But the deep eddies whelmed both man and horse
 Swept like benighted peasant down the tide,
 And the proud Moslemah spread far and wide,
 As numerous as then native locust band,
 Beiber and Ismael's sons the spoils divide,
 With naked scimitars mete out the land,
 And for their bondsmen base the freeborn natives brand
- 23 Then rose the grated Harem, to enclose
 The loveliest maidens of the Christian line,
 Then, menials to their misbelieving foes,
 Castle's young nobles held forbidden wine,
 Then, too, the holy Cross, salvation's sign,
 By impious hands was from the altar thrown,
 And the deep rules of the polluted shrine
 Echoed, for holy hymn and organ tone,
 The Santon's frantic dance the Fakir's gibbering moan
- 24 How fares Don Roderick ? — E'en as one who spies
 Flumes dart then glare o'er midnight's sable woof,
 And hears around his children's piercing cries,
 And sees the pale assistants stand aloof,
 While cruel Conscience brings him bitter proof,
 His folly, or his crime, have caused his grief,
 And, while above him noas the crumbling roof,
 He curses earth and Heaven — himself in chief —
 Desperate of earthly aid, despairing Heaven's relief !
- 25 That scythe-armed Giant turned his fatal glass
 And twilight on the landscape closed her wings,
 Far to Asturian hills the war-sounds pass
 And in their sterd rebeck or timbrel rings,

The kind obey's a Hermit and a Knight,
The Genu these of Spain for many an age,
Thus clad in velvet cloth, that in armor bright,
And that was VALOUR named, this BICORN was I ght.

28 VALOUR was harnessed like a Chief of old,
Armed at all points, and prompt for nightly get
His sword was tempered in the Lbro cold,
Morena's eagle-plume adorned his crest,
The spoils of Afric's lion bound his breast
Fierce he stepped forward and flung down his eye,
As if of mortal kind to brave the best
Him followed his Companion, dark and large
As he, my Master, sung the dangerous Archmage.

29 Haughty of heart and brow the Warrior came,
In look and language proud as proud might be,
Vaunting his lordship lineage, fights and fame,
Yet was that bare-foot Monk more proud than he,
And as the ivy climbs the tallest tree,
So round the loftiest soul his toils he wound,
And with his spells subdued the fierce and free,
Till ermm'd Age, and Youth in arms renowned,
Honouring his scourge and hair-cloth, meckly kissed the
ground

30 And thus it chanced that VALOR, peerless Knight,
Who ne'er to King or Kaiser veiled his crest,
Victorious still in bull-feast, or in fight,
Since first his limbs with mail he did invest,
Stooped ever to that Anchoret's behest,
Nor reason'd of the right nor of the wrong,
But at his bidding had the lance in rest,
And wrought fell deeds the troubled world along,
For he was fierce as brave, and pitiless as strong

- 31 Oft his proud galleys sought some new found world,
 First latest sees the sun, or first the morn,
 Still at that Wizard's feet their spoils he hurled,—
 Ingots of ore from rich Potosi borne,
 Crowns by Caciques, agreates by Omrahs worn,
 Wrought of rare gems, but broken, rent, and foul,
 Idols of gold from leathen temples torn,
 Bedabbled all with blood—With grisly scowl
 The Hermit marked the stains, and smiled beneath his cowl
- 32 Then did he bless the offering, and bade make
 Tribute to heaven of gratitude and praise,
 And at his word the choral hymns awake
 And many a hand the silver censer sways
 But with the incense-breath these censers raise
 Mix steams from corpses smouldering in the fire
 The groans of prisoned victims mix the lays,
 And shrieks of agony confound the quire
 While, 'mid the mingled sounds, the darkened scenes expire
- 33 Preluding light, were strains of music heard,
 As once again revolved that measured sand
 Such sounds as when for sylvan dance prepared
 Gay Xeres summons forth her vintage band,
 When for the light Bolero ready stand
 The Mozo blithe, with gay Muchacha met,
 He conscious of his broided cap and band,
 She of her netted locks and light corsette,
 Each tiptoe perched to spring, and shake the castnet
- 34 And well such strains the opening scene became,
 For VAIOUR had relaxed his ardent look,
 And at a lady's feet, like lion tame
 Lay stretched, full loth the weight of arms to brook,
 And softened BIGOTRY upon his book
 Pattered a task of little good or ill
 But the blithe peasant plied his pruning-hook
 Whistled the muleteer o'er vale and hill,
 And rung from village green the merry Seguidille
- 35 Gray Royalty, grown impotent of toil,
 Let the grave sceptre slip his hazy hold,
 And careless saw his rule become the spoil
 Of a loose Female and her Minion bold,
 But peace was on the cottage and the fold
 From court intrigue, from bickering faction far
 Beneath the chesnut-tree Love's tale was told,
 And to the tinkling of the light guitar
 Sweet stooped the western sun, sweet rose the evening star
- 36 As that ser-cloud, in size like human hand
 When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen
 Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
 While perchance, bedecked with colours sheen,
 While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been

Limning with purple and with gold its shroud,
 Till darker folds obscured the blue scene,
 And blotted Heaven with one broad sable cloud—
 Then sheeted rain burst down, and whirlwinds howled aloud,—

- 37 Even so upon that peaceful scene was poured,
 Like gathering clouds, full many a foreign band,
 And HE, their Leader, wore in sheath his sword,
 And offered peaceful front and open hand,
 Veiling the perjured treachery he planned,
 By friendship's zeal and honour's specious guise,
 Until he won the passes of the land,
 Then, burst were honour's oath, and friendship's ties!
 He clutched his vulture-grasp, and called fair Spain his prize

- 38 An Iron Crown his anxious forehead bore,
 And well such diadem his heart became,
 Who ne'er his purpose for remorse gave o'er,
 Or checked his course for piety or shame,
 Who, trained a soldier, deemed a soldier's fame
 Might flourish in the wreath of battles won,
 Though neither truth nor honour decked his name,
 Who, placed by fortune on a Monarch's throne,
 Recked not of Monarch's faith, or Mercy's kingly tone

- 39 From a rude isle his ruder lineage came
 The spark, that, from a suburb hovel's hearth
 Ascending, wraps some capital in flame,
 Hath not a merrier or more sordid birth
 And for the soul that bade him waste the earth—
 The sable land-flood from some swamp obscure,
 That poisons the glad husband-field with death,
 And by destruction bids its fame endure,
 Hath not a source more sullen, stagnant, and impure

- 40 Before that Leader strode a shadowy Form
 Her limbs like mist, her torch like meteor showed,
 With which she beckoned him through fight and storm
 And all he crushed that crossed his desperate road,
 Nor thought, nor feared, nor looked on what he trod—
 Realms could not glut his pride, blood could not slake
 So oft as e'er she shook her torch abroad—
 It was AMBITION bade his terrors wake,
 Nor deigned she, as of yore, a milder form to take

- 41 No longer now she spurned at mean revenge,
 Or stayed her hand for conquered foeman's moan,
 As when, the fates of aged Rome to change,
 By CÆSAR's side she crossed the Rubicon,
 Nor joyed she to bestow the spoils she won,
 As when the banded powers of Greece were tasked,
 To war beneath the youth of Macedon
 No seemly veil her modern minion asked,
 He saw her hideous face, and loved the fiend unmasked

- 42 That Prelate marked his march—On banners blazed
 With battles won in many a distant land,
 On eagle-standards and on arms he gazed,
 "And hopest thou, then," he said, "thy power shall
 stand?
 O thou hast builded on the shifting sand,
 And thou hast tempered it with slaughter's flood,
 And know, fell scourge in the Almighty's hand!
 Gore-moistened trees shall perish in the bud,
 And, by a bloody death, shall die the Man of Blood!"—
- 43 The ruthless Leader beckoned from his train
 A wan fraternal Shade, and bade him kneel,
 And paled his temples with the crown of Spain,
 While trumpets rang, and heralds cried, "Castle!"
 Not that he loved him—No!—in no man's weal,
 Scarce in his own, e'er joyed that sullen heart,
 Yet round that throne he bade his wondrous wheel,
 That the poor puppet might perform his part,
 And be a sceptred slave, at his stern beck to start
- 44 But on the Natives of that Land misused,
 Not long the silence of amazement hung,
 Nor brooked they long their friendly faith abused,
 For, with a common shriek, the general tongue
 Exclaimed, "To arms!" and fast to arms they sprung,
 And VALOUR woke, that Genius of the land!
 Pleasure, and ease, and sloth, aside he flung,
 As buist the awakening Nizante his brand,
 When 'gainst his treacherous foes he clenched his dreadful
 hand
- 45 That mimic Monarch now cast anxious eye
 Upon the Satiaps that begirt him round,
 Now doffed his royal robe in act to fly,
 And from his brow the diadem unbound
 So oft, so near, the Patriot bugle wound,
 From Truk's walls to Bilbor's mountains blown,
 These martial satellites had labour found
 To guard awhile his substituted throne—
 Light recking of his cause, but battling for their own
- 46 From Alpuharr's peak that bugle rung,
 And it was echoed from Corunna's wall,
 Stately Seville responsive war-shout flung,
 Granada caught it in her Moorish hall,
 Galicia bade her children fight or fall,
 Wild Biscay shook his mountain-coronet,
 Valencia roused her at the battle-call,
 And, foremost still where Valour's sons are met,
 First started to his gun each fiery Miquelet
- 47 But unappalled and burning for the fight,
 The Invaders march of victory secure,

Skilful their force to over-castle,
 And truncheon-like to vanquish or endure.

Nor skilful less, cheap conquest to endure,
 Discord to breathe, and jealousy to sow,

To quell by boasting, and by bribes to lure;
 While nought against them bring the trumpet or the

Save hearts for freedom's cause, and hands for freedom's

18 Proudly they march—but O! they march not forth
 By one hot field to crown a triumph or a

As when their eagles, sweeping through the North,
 Destroyed at every stoop an ancient ruin!

Far other fate had Heaven decreed for Spain;
 In vain the steel, in vain the torch was plied,

New Patriot armies started from the plain,
 High blazed the war, and long and far, and wide,

And oft the God of Battles blessed the righteous side

49 Nor unatoned, where Freedom's foes prevail,
 Remained their savage waste—With blade and brand,

By day the Invaders ravaged hill and dale,
 But, with the darkness, the *Guerilla* band

Came like night's tempest, and avenged the land,
 And clumed for blood the retaliation due

Probed the hard heart, and lopped the murderous hand,
 And Dawn, when o'er the scene her beams she threw,

'Midst ruins they had made the spoilers' corpses new

50 What minstrel verse may sing, or tongue may tell,
 Amid the visioned strife from sea to sea,

How oft the Patriot banners rose or fell,
 Still honoured in defeat as victory!

For that sad pageant of events to be
 Showed every form of fight by field and flood,

Slaughter and Ruin, shouting forth their glee,
 Beheld, while riding on the tempest-scud,

The waters choked with slain, the earth bedrenched with
 blood!

51 Then Zaragoza—blighted be the tongue
 That names thy name without the honour due!

For never hath the harp of minstrel rung
 Of futh so felly proved, so firmly true!

Mine, sap, and bomb, thy shattered ruins knew,
 Each art of war's extremity had room,

Twice from thy half sacked streets the foe withdrew,
 And when at length stern Fate decreed thy doom,

They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb

52 Yet raise thy head, sad City! Though in chains
 Enthralled thou canst not be! Arise and claim

Reverence from every heart where Freedom reigns,
 For what thou worshipp'st!—thy sainted Dame,

—the of the Column, honoured be her name.

By all, whate'er their creed, who honour love'
 And like the sacred relics of the flame
 That gave some martyr to the blessed above,
 To every loyal heart may thy sad embers prove'

53 Not thine alone such wreck Geroni fair!
 Faithful to death thy heroes should be sung,
 Manning the towers while o'er their heads the air
 Swart as the smoke from raging furnace hung
 Now thicker darkening where the mine was sprung,
 Now briefly lightened by the cannon's flare,
 Now arched with fire-sparks as the bomb was flung,
 And reddening now with conflagration's glare,
 While by the fatal light the foes for storm prepare

54 While all around was danger, strife, and fear,
 While the earth shook, and darkened was the sky,
 And wide Destruction stunned the listening ear,
 Appalled the heart, and stupified the eye,—
 Afar was heard that thrice-repeated cry
 In which old Albion's heart and tongue unite,
 Whene'er her soul is up and pulse beats high,
 Whether it hail the wine-cup or the fight,
 And bid each arm be strong, or bid each heart be light

55 Don Roderick turned him as the shout grew loud—
 A varied scene the changeful vision showed,
 For where the ocean mingled with the cloud,
 A gallant navy stemmed the billows broad
 From mast and stern St George's symbol flowed,
 Blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear,
 Mottling the sea then landward barges rowed,
 And flashed the sun on bayonet, brand, and spear,
 And the wild beach returned the seaman's jovial cheer

56 It was a dread, yet spirit stirring sight!
 The billows formed beneath a thousand arms,
 Fast as they land the red-cross ranks unite,
 Legions on legions brightening all the shores
 Then banners rise, and cannon-signal roars,
 Then peals the warlike thunder of the drum,
 Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet-flourish pours,
 And patriot hopes awake, and doubts are dumb,
 For, bold in Freedom's cause, the bands of Ocean come!

57 A various host they came—whose ranks display
 Each mode in which the warrior meets the fight
 The deep battalion locks its firm array,
 And meditates his aim the marksman light,
 Far glance the lines of sabres flashing bright,
 Where mounted squadrons shake the echoing main,
 Lacks not artillery breathing flame and night,
 Nor the fleet ordnance whirled by rapid steed,
 That rivals lightning's flash in ruin and in speed

- 58 A various host—from kindred realms they came,
 Brethren in arms, but rivals in renown—
 For yon fair bands shall merry England clum,
 And with their deeds of valour deck her crown
 Hers their bold poit, and hers their martial frown,
 And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,
 Their eyes of azure, and their locks of brown,
 And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,
 And freeborn thoughts, which league the Soldier with the
 Laws
- 59 And O! loved warriors of the Minstrel's land!
 Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave,
 The rugged form may mark the mountain band,
 And harsher features, and a mien more grave,
 But ne'er in battle-field throbb'd heart so brave
 As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid,
 And when the pibroch bids the battle rave,
 And level for the charge your arms are laid,
 Where lives the desperate foe, that for such onset stay'd
- 60 Hark! from yon stately ranks what laughter rings,
 Mingling wild mirth with war's stern minstrelsy,
 His jest while each blithe comrade round him flings,
 And moves to death with military glee
 Boast, Lum, boast them! tameless, frank, and free,
 In kindness warm, and fierce in danger known,
 Rough Nature's children, humorous as she
 And He, yon Chieftain—strike the proudest tone
 Of thy bold harp, green Isle!—the HERO is thine own
- 61 Now on the scene Venceir should be shown,
 On Talavera's fight should Roderick gaze,
 And hear Corunna wail her battle won,
 And see Busaco's crest with lightning blaze —
 But shall fond fable mix with heroes' praise?
 Hath Fiction's stage for Truth's long triumphs room
 And dare her wild-flowers mingle with the bays,
 That clum a long eternity to bloom
 Around the warrior's crest, and o'er the warrior's tomb
- 62 Or may I give adventurous Fancy scope,
 And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil
 That hides futurity from anxious hope,
 Bidding beyond it scenes of glory hail,
 And painting Europe rousing at the tale
 Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurled,
 While kindling Nations buckle on their mail,
 And Fame, with chariot blast and wings unfurled,
 For freedom and revenge awakes an injured World
- 63 O vain, though anxious, is the glance I cast,
 Since Fate has mark'd futurity her own —
 Yet Fate resigns to Worth the glorious past,
 The deeds recorded and the laurels won

Then, though the Vault of Destiny be gone,
 King, Prelate, all the phantasms of my brain
 Melted away like mist-wreaths in the sun,
 Yet grant for faith, for valour, and for Spain,
 One note of pride and fire, a Patriot's parting strain.

CONCLUSION

- 1 ' Who shall command Estrella's mountain-tide
 Back to the source, when tempest-chafed, to his?
 Who, when Gascogne's vexed gulf is raging wide,
 Shall hush it as a nurse her infant's cry?
 His magic power let such vain boaster try,
 And when the torrent shall his voice obey,
 And Biscay's whirlwinds list his lullaby,
 Let him stand forth and bar mine eagles' way,
 And they shall heed his voice, and at his bidding stay.
- 2 "Else, ne'er to stoop, till high on Lisbon's towers,
 They close their wings the symbol of our yoke,
 And their own sea hath whelmed yon red cross Powers!"
 Thus, on the summit of Alverci's rock,
 To Marshal, Duke, and Peer, Gaul's Leader spoke
 While downward on the land his legions press,
 Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
 And smiled like Eden in her summer dress,—
 Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness
- 3 And shall the boastful Chief maintain his word,
 Though Heaven hath heard the wailings of the land
 Though Lusitania whet her vengeful sword,
 Though Britons arm, and WELLINGTON command?
 No! grim Busico's iron ridge shall stand
 An adamantine barrier to his force!
 And from its base shall wheel his shattered land,
 As from the unshaken rock the torrent horse
 Bears off its broken waves, and seeks a devious course
- 4 Yet not because Alcoba's mountain-havak
 Hath on his best and bravest made her food,
 In numbers confident, yon Chief shall bask
 His Lord's imperial thirst for spoil and blood
 For full in view the promised conquest stood,
 And Lisbon's matrons, from their walls, might sum
 The myriads that had half the world subdued,
 And hear the distant thunders of the drum,
 That bids the band of France to storm and havoc come
- 5 Four moons have heard these thunders idly rolled,
 Have seen these wistful myriads eye their prey,
 As famished wolves survey a guarded fold—
 But in the middle path a Lion lay!
 At length they move—but not to battle-fray,

Nor blaze yon fires where meets the manly fight;
 Beacons of infamy, they light the way,
 Where cowardice and cruelty unite,
 To damn with double shame their ignominious flight

6 O triumph for the Fiends of Lust and Wrath!
 Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to be forgot,
 What wanton horrors marked their wrackful path!
 The peasant butchered in his ruined cot,
 The holy priest even at the altar shot,
 Childhood and age given o'er to sword and flame,
 Woman to infamy,—no crime forgot,
 By which inventive demons might proclaim
 Immortal hate to Man, and scorn of God's great name!

7 The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
 With horror paused to view the havoc done,
 Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn,
 Wiped his stern eye, then fiercer gripped his gun
 Nor with less zeal shall Britain's persecutor
 Exult the debt of sympathy to pay,
 Riches nor poverty the trait shall shun,
 Nor prince nor peer, the wealthy nor the gay,
 Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor bard's more worthless lay

8 But thou unsoughten wilt thou yield to Fate,
 Minion of Fortune now miscalled in vain!
 Can advantage-ground no confidence create,
 Marcellus's pass, nor Guardar's mountain-chain?
 Van-glorious Fugitive! yet turn again!
 Behold, where, named by some Prophetic Seer,
 Flows Honour's Fountain, as fore-doomed the stain
 From thy dishonoured name and arms to clear—
 Fallen Child of Fortune, turn, redeem her favour here!

9 Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each distant aid
 Those chief that never heard the Lion roar!
 Within whose souls lives not a trace portrayed
 Of Talavera, or Mondego's shore!
 Marshal each band thou hast, and summon more,
 Of war's fell stratagems exhaust the whole,
 Rank upon rank, squadron on squadron pour,
 Legion on legion on thy foeman roll,
 And weary out his arm—thou canst not quell his soul

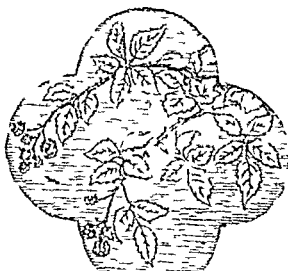
10 O vainly gleams with steel Aguedar's shore,
 Vainly thy squadrons hide Assurur's plain,
 And front the flying thunders as they roar,
 With frantic charge, and tenfold odds, in vain!
 And what avails thee that, for Cameron slain,
 Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given—
 Vengeance and grief gave mountain rage the rein,
 And, at the bloody spear-point herdlong driven,
 The Despot's grant guards fled like the rack of heaven

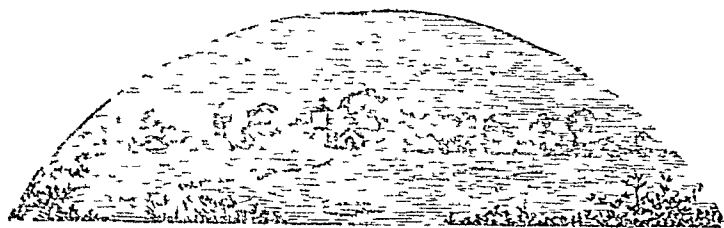
- 11 Go, baffled Boaster ! teach thy haughty mood
 To plead at thine imperious master's throne !
 Say, thou hast left his legions in their blood,
 Deceived his hopes, and frustrated thine own ,
 Say, that thine utmost skill and valour shown
 By British skill and valour were outvied ,
 Last say, thy conqueror was WFLINGTON !
 And if he chafe, be his own fortune tried—
 God and our cause to friend, the venture we'll abide
- 12 But ye, the heroes of that well-fought day,
 How shall a bard, unknowing and unknown,
 His meed to each victorious leader pay,
 Or bind on every brow the laurels won ?
 Yet fain my harp would wake its boldest tone,
 O'er the wide sea to hail CADOGAN brave ,
 And he, perchance, the minstrel note might own,
 Mindful of meeting brief that Fortune gave
 'Mid yon far western isles, that hear the Atlantic rave
- 13 Yes ! hard the task, when Britons wield the sword,
 To give each Chief and every field its fame
 Hark ! Albuera thunders BERESFORD,
 And red Baiossa shouts for dauntless GRÆME !
 O for a verse of tumult and of flame,
 Bold as the bursting of their cannon sound,
 To bid the world re-echo to their fame !
 For never, upon gory battle-ground,
 With conquest's well-bought wreath were braver victors
 crowned !
- 14 O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,
 Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
 Roused them to emulate their father's praise,
 Tempered their herdlong rage, then courage steed,
 And rused fair Lusitania's fallen shield,
 And gave new edge to Lusitania's sword,
 And taught her sons forgotten aims to wield—
 Shivered my harp and burst its every chord,
 If it forget thy worth, victorious BERESFORD !
- 15 Not on that bloody field of battle won,
 Though Gaul's proud legions rolled like mist away
 Was half his self-devoted valour shown,—
 He gaged but life on that illustrious day,
 But when he toiled those squadrons to array
 Who fought like Britons in the bloody game,
 Sharper than Polish pike or assagay,
 He braved the shafts of censure and of shame
 And, dearer far than life, he pledged a soldier's fame
- 16 Nor be his praise o'erpassed who strove to hide
 Beneath the warrior's vest affection's wound,
 Whose wish Heaven for his country's weal denied ,
 Danger and fate he sought, but glory found

From clime to clime, where'er war's trumpets sound,
 The wanderer went, yet, Caledonia! still
 Thine was his thought in march and tented ground,
 He dreamed 'mid Alpine cliffs of Athole's hill,
 And heard in Ebro's roar his Lyndoch's lovely rill

- 17 O hero of a race renowned of old,
 Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell,
 Since first distinguished in the onset bold,
 Wild sounding when the Roman rampart fell!
 By Wallace' side it rung the Southron's knell,
 Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber owned its fame,
 Tummell's rude pass can of its terrors tell,
 But ne'er from prouder field arose the name
 Than when wild Ronda learned the conquering shout of
 GRÆME!

- 18 But all too long, through seas unknown and dark,
 (With Spenser's parable I close my tale,)
 By shoal and rock hath steered my venturous bark;
 And landward now I drive before the gale
 And now the blue and distant shore I hail,
 And nearer now I see the port expand,
 And now I gladly fuil my weary sail,
 And, as the prow light touches on the strand,
 I strike my red-cross flag, and bind my skiff to land.





ROKEBY

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

TO

JOHN B S MORRITT, ESQ.,

THIS POEM, THE SCENE OF WHICH IS LAID IN HIS BEAUTIFUL
DEMFENE OF ROKEBY, IS INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN OF
SINCERE FRIENDSHIP, BY
WALTER SCOTT

Dec 31st, 1812

ADVERTISEMENT TO FIRST EDITION, 1813

THE scene of this poem is laid at Rokeby, near Gretna Bridge, in Yorkshire, and shifts to the adjacent fortress of Barnard Castle, and to other places in that vicinity.

The time occupied by the action is a space of Five Days, three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the Fifth and Beginning of the Sixth Canto.

The date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great battle of Marston Moor 3d July, 1644. This period of public confusion has been chosen, without any purpose of combining the Fable with the Military or Political Events of the Civil War but only as affording a degree of probability to the Fictitious Narrative now presented to the Public.

CANTO FIRST

- I THE Moon is in her summer glow,
But hourse and hugh the breezes blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the cloud
Vanes the tincture of her shroud,
On Barnard's towers and Tees's stream,
She changes as a guilty dream,
When Conscience, with remorse and fear,
Goads sleeping Fancy's wild career
Her light seemed now the blush of shame,
Seemed now fierce anger's darker flame,

Shifting that shade, to come and go,
 Like apprehension's hurried glow,
 Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
 And dies in darkness, like despair
 Such varied hues the wanderer sees
 Reflected from the woodland trees,
 Then from old Babilon's tower looks forth,
 Sees the clouds mustering in the north,
 Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,
 By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,
 Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
 And wraps his shaggy mantle round

2 Those towers, which in the changeful gleam
 Throw murky shadows on the stream,
 Those towers of Barnard hold a guest,
 The emotions of whose troubled breast
 In wild and strange confusion driven,
 Rival the flitting rack of heaven
 Ere sleep stern OSWALD's senses tied,
 Oft had he changed his weary side,
 Composed his limbs and vainly sought
 By effort strong to banish thought
 Sleep came at length, but with a train
 Of feelings true and fancies vain,
 Mingling, in wild disorder cast,
 The expected future with the past.
 Conscience, anticipating time,
 Already rues the enacted crime,
 And calls her furies forth, to shake
 The sounding scourge and hissing snake,
 While her poor victim's outward throes
 Bear witness to his mortal woes,
 And show what lesson may be read
 Beside a sinner's restless bed

3 Thus Oswald's labouring feelings trace
 Strange changes in his sleeping face,
 Rapid and ominous as these
 With which the moonbeams tinge the Trees
 There might be seen of shame the blush,
 There anger's dark and fiercer flush,
 While the perturbed sleeper's hand
 Seemed grasping dagger-knife, or brand
 Relaxed that grasp, the heavy sigh,
 The tear in the half opening eye,
 The pallid cheek and brow, confessed
 That grief was busy in his breast,
 Nor paused that mood—a sudden start
 Impelled the life-blood from the heart:
 Features convulsed, and mutterings dread,
 Show terror reigns in sorrow's stead

That pang the painful slumber broke,
And Oswald with a start awoke

- 4 He woke, and feared again to close
His eyelids in such dire repose,
He woke,—to watch the lamp, and tell
From hour to hour the castle-bell,
Or listen to the owl's cry,
Or the sad breeze that whistles by,
Or catch, by fits, the tuneless rhyme
With which the warder cheats the time,
And envying think how, when the sun
Bids the poor soldier's watch be done,
Couched on his straw, and fancy-free,
He sleeps like careless infancy
5. Far townward sounds a distant tread,
And Oswald, starting from his bed,
Hath caught it, though no human ear,
Unsharpened by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank,
Until it reached the castle bank
Now nigh and plain the sound appears
The warder's challenge now he hears,
Then clanking chains and levers tell
That o'er the moat the drawbridge fell
And, in the castle court below,
Voices are heard, and torches glow,
As marshalling the stranger's way,
Straight for the room where Oswald lay,
The cry was,—“Tidings from the host,
Of weight—a messenger comes post”—
Stifling the tumult of his breast,
His answer Oswald thus expressed—
“Bring food and wine, and trim the fire,
Admit the stranger and retire”—
- 6 The stranger came with heavy stride,
The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff-coat, an ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould
Full slender answer deign'd he
To Oswald's anxious courtesy,
But marked, by a disdainful smile,
He saw and scorned the petty wile,
When Oswald changed the torch's place,
Anxious that on the soldier's face
Its partial lustre might be thrown,
To show his looks, yet hide his own.
His guest, the while, laid slow aside
The ponderous cloak of tough bull's hide,
And to the torch glanced broad and clear
The corslet of a cuirassier,
Then from his brows the casque he drew

And from the dank plume dashed the dew,
From gloves of mail relieved his hands,
And spread them to the kindling brands,
And, turning to the genial board,
Without a health, or pledge, or word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed,
As free from ceremony's sway,
As famished wolf that tears his prey

- 7 With deep impatience tinged with fear
His host beheld him gorge his cheer,
And quaff the full carouse, that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment
Now Oswald stood a space aside,
Now paced the room with hasty stride
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread concern,
Cursing each moment that his guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast
Yet viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast.
Almost he seemed their haste to see
As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
And left him with the stranger, free
To question of his mystery
Then did his silence long proclaim
A struggle between fear and shame.

8. Much in the stranger's mien appears,
To justify suspicious fears
On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time,
Roughened the brow, the temples bared,
And sable hairs with silver shared,
Yet left—what age alone could tame—
The lip of pride, the eye of flame,
The full-drawn lip that upward curled,
The eye, that seemed to scorn the world,
That lip had terror never blenched,
Ne'er in that eye hath tear drop quenched
The flash severe of swarthy glow,
That mocked at pain, and knew not woe,
Inured to danger's direst form,
Fornade and earthquake, flood and storm,
Death had he seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures slow,
By mine or breach, by steel or bill,
Knew all his shapes, and scorned them all.

- 9 But yet, though Bertram's hardened look
Unmoved could blood and danger brook,
Still worse than apathy had place
On his swart brow and callous face,

To share such safe and easy home,
 From fields where danger, death, and toil,
 Are the reward of civil broil?"—
 —"Nay, mock not friend!—since well we know
 The near advances of the foe,
 To mar our northern army's work,
 Encamped before beleaguered York,
 Thy horse with valiant Fairfax lay,
 And must have fought—how went the day?"

- 12 "Wouldst hear the tale?—On Marston heath
 Met, front to front, the ranks of death,
 Flourished the trumpets fierce, and now
 Fired was each eye, and flushed each brow,
 On either side loud clamours ring,
 'God and the Cause!'—'God and the King!'
 Right English all, they rushed to blows,
 With nought to win, and all to lose
 I could have laughed—but lacked the time—
 To see, in phrenesy sublime,
 How the fierce zealots fought and bled,
 For king or state, as humour led,
 Some for a dream of public good,
 Some for church-tippet, gown and hood
 Draining their veins, in death to claim
 A patriot's or a martyr's name—
 Led Bertram Risingham the hearts
 That countered there on adverse parts,
 No superstitious fool had I
 Sought El Dorados in the sky!
 Chili had heard me through her states,
 And Lima oped her silver gates,
 Rich Mexico I had marched through,
 And sicked the splendours of Peru,
 Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
 And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's fame"
 —"Still from the purpose wilt thou stray!
 Good gentle friend, how went the day?"

- 13 —"Good am I deemed it trumpet-sound,
 And good where goblets dance the round,
 Though gentle ne'er was join'd, till now,
 With rugged Bertram's breast and brow—
 But I resume The battle's rage
 Was like the strife which currents wage,
 Where Orinoco, in his pride,
 Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
 But 'gunst broad ocean urges far
 A rival sea of roiling war,
 While, in ten thousand eddies driven,
 The billows sling their foam to heaven
 And the pale pilot seeks in vain,
 Where rolls the river, where the main



" On Maiston Heath,
Met, front to front, the ranks of death "

Even thus, upon the bloody field,
 The eddying tides of conflict wheeled
 Ambiguous, till that heart of flame,
 Hot Rupert, on our squadrons came,
 Hurling against our spears a line
 Of gallants, fiery as their wine,
 Then ours, though stubborn in their zeal,
 In zeal's despite began to reel
 What wouldst thou more?—in tumult tossed,
 Our leaders fell, our ranks were lost
 A thousand men, who drew the sword
 For both the Houses and the Word,
 Pierched forth from hamlet, grange, and down
 To curb the crosier and the crown,
 Now, stark and stiff, lie stretched in gore,
 And ne'er shall rail at mitre more —
 Thus fired it, when I left the fight,
 With the good Cause and Commons' right " —

14. "Disastrous news!" dark Wycliffe said,
Assumed despondence bent his head,
 While troubled joy was in his eye,
 The well-feigned sorrow to belie —
 "Disastrous news!"—when needed most,
 Told ye not that your chiefs were lost?—
 Complete the woeful tale, and say,
 Who fell upon that fatal day,
 What leaders of repute and name
 Bought by their death a deathless fame!
 If such my direst foeman's doom,
 My tears shall dew his honoured tomb —
 No answer?—Friend, of all our host,
 Thou know'st whom I should hate the most,
 Whom thou too, once, wert wont to hate
 Yet leavest me doubtful of his fate " —
 With look unmoved,—“Of friend or foe,
 Aught,” answered Bertram, “wouldst thou know,
 Demand in simple terms and plain,
 A soldier's answer shalt thou gain,
 For question dark, or riddle high,
 I have not judgment nor reply ”
- 15 The wrath his art and fear suppressed
 Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's breast,
 And brave, from man so meanly born,
 Roused his hereditary scorn
 “Wretch! hast thou paid thy bloody debt?
 PHILIP OR MORTHAM, lives he yet?
 False to thy patron or thine oath,
 True'rous or perjured, one or both
 Slave! hast thou kept thy promise plight,
 To slay thy leader in the fight? ” —
 Then from his seat the soldier sprung,

And Wycliffe's hand he strongly wrung;
 His grasp, as hard as glove of mail,
 Forced the red blood-drop from the nail—
 "A health!" he cried, and ere he was
 Flung from him Wycliffe's hand, and laughed
 —"Now, Oswald Wycliffe, speed thy heart!
 Now play'st thou well thy genuine part!
 Worthy, but for thy craven fears,
 Like me to roam a buccinner
 What reck'st thou of the Cause divine,
 If Mortham's wealth and lands be thine?
 What carest thou for beleaguered York,
 If this good hand have done its work?
 Or what, though Fairfax and his best
 Are reddening Mirston's swartly breast
 If Philip Mortham with them lie,
 Lending his life-blood to the dye?
 Sit, then! and as 'mid comrades free
 Carousing after victory,
 When tales are told of blood and fear,
 That boys and women shrink to hear,
 From point to point I frankly tell
 The deed of death as it befell

- 16 "When purposed vengeance I forego,
 Term me a wretch, nor deem me foe,
 And when an insult I forgive,
 Then brand me as a slave, and live!—
 Philip of Mortham is with those
 Whom Bertram Risingham calls foes,
 Or whom more sure revenge attends,
 If numbered with ungrateful friends
 As was his wont, ere battle glowed,
 Along the marshalled ranks he rode,
 And wore his visor up the while
 I saw his melancholy smile,
 When, full opposed in front, he knew
 Where Rokeby's kindred banner flew
 'And thus,' he said, 'will friends divide!—
 I heard, and thought how, side by side,
 We two had turned the battle's tide,
 In many a well-debated field,
 Where Bertram's breast was Philip's shield.
 I thought on Darien's deserts pale,
 Where death bestrides the evening gale,
 How o'er my friend my cloak I threw,
 And fenceless faced the deadly dew
 I thought on Quarraw's cliff,
 Where, rescued from our foundering skiff,
 Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
 Exhausted Mortham to the shore,
 And when his side an arrow found,

I sucked the Indian's venom'd wound
These thoughts like torrents rushed along,
To sweep away my purpose strong

- 17 "Hearts are not flint, and flints are rent,
Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent
When Mortham bade me as of yore,
I'm near him in the battle's roar,
I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
I scarcely heard the trumpets blow,
Lost was the war in inward strife,
Debating Mortham's death or life
'Twas then I thought, how, lured to come,
As partner of his wealth and home,
Years of piratic wandering o'er,
With him I sought our native shore
But Mortham's lord grew far estranged
From the bold heart with whom he ranged,
Doubts, horrors, superstitious fears,
Saddened and dimmed descending years,
The wily priests their victim sought,
And damned each free-born deed and thought
Then must I seek another home,
My licence shook his sober dome,
If gold he gave, in one wild day
I revelled thrice the sum away
An idle outcast then I strayed,
Unfit for tillage or for trade—
Deemed, like the steel of rusted lance,
Useless and dangerous at once
The women feared my hardy look,
At my approach the peaceable shook
The merchant saw my glance of flame,
And locked his hoards when Bertram came;
Each child of coward peace kept far
From the neglected son of war

- 18 "But civil discord gave the call,
And made my trade the trade of all
By Mortham urged, I came again
His vassals to the fight to train
What guerdon waited on my care?
I could not cant of creed or prayer,
Sour fanatics each trust obtained,
And I, dishonoured and disdained,
Gained but the high and happy lot,
In these poor arms to front the shot—
All this thou know'st, thy gestures tell,
Yet hear it o'er, and mark it well
'Tis honour bids me now relate
Each circumstance of Mortham's fate

- 19 "Thoughts from the tongue that slowly part
Glance quick as lightning through the heart

As my spur pressed my courser's side,
Philip of Northam's cause was tried,
And, ere the charging squadrons mixed,
His plea was lost, his doom was fixed
I watched him through the doubtful fray,
That changed as March's moody day,
Till, like a stream that bursts its bank,
Fierce Rupert thundered on our flank
'Twas then, 'midst tumult, smoke, and strife,
Where each man fought for death or life,
'Twas then I fired my petronel,
And Northam, steed and rider, fell
One dying look he upward cast,
Of wrath and anguish—'twas his last
Think not that there I stopped to view
What of the battle should ensue,
But ere I cleared that bloody press,
Our northern horse ran masterless,
Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of Roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, passed,
Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed
Yet when I reached the banks of Swale,
Had rumour learned another tale;
With his barbed horse, fresh tidings say,
Stout Cromwell has redeemed the day,
But whether false the news, or true,
Oswald, I reck as light as you"—

- 20 Not then by Wycliffe might be shown
How his pride startled at the tone
In which his complice, fierce and free,
Asserted guilt's equality
In smoothest terms his speech he wove,
Of endless friendship, faith, and love,
Promised and vowed in courteous sort,
But Bertram broke professions short
"Wycliffe, be sure not here I stray,
No, scarcely till the rising day,
Warned by the legends of my youth,
I trust not an associate's truth
Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Trained forward to his bloody fall
By Girsoufield, that treacherous Hall?
Oft, by the Pringle's haunted side,
The shepherd sees his specter glide
And near the spot that gave me name,
The mottled mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees

Sweet Woodburn's cottages and trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has shown
An outlaw's image on the stone
Unmatched in strength, a giant he,
With quivered back, and kirtled knee
Ask how he died, that hunter bold,
The tameless monarch of the wold,
And age and infancy can tell,
By brother's treachery he fell —
Thus warned by legends of my youth
I trust to no associate's truth

21 "When last we reasoned of this deed,
Nought, I bethink me, was agreed
Or by what rule, or when, or where,
The wealth of Mortham we should share;
Then list, while I the portion name
Our differing laws give each to claim
Thou, vassal sworn to England's throne,
Her rules of heritage must own,
They deal thee, as to nearest heir,
Thy kinsman's lands and livings fair,
And these I yield —do thou revere
The statutes of the buccaneer
Friend to the sea, and foeman sworn
To all that on her waves are borne,
When falls a mate in battle broil,
His comrade heirs his portioned spoil,
When dies in fight a daring foe,
He claims his wealth who struck the blow
And either rule to me assigns
Those spoils of Indian seas and mines,
Horred in Mortham's caverns dark,
Ingot of gold and diamond spark,
Chalice and plate from churches borne,
And gems from shrieking beauty torn,
Each string of pearl, each silver bar,
And all the wealth of western war
I go to search, where, dark and deep,
Those Trans-Atlantic treasures sleep
Thou must along—for, lacking thee,
The heir will scarce find entrance free
And then farewell. I haste to try
Each varied pleasure wealth can buy
When cloyed each wish, these wars afford
Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword"—

22. An undecided answer hung
On Oswald's hesitating tongue
Despite his craft, he heard with awe
This ruffian stabber fix the law,
While his own troubled passions veer,
Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear,—

Joyed at the soul that Bertram fired—
 He gauded the murderer's mighty prize,
 Hated his pride, presumptuous tone,
 And feared to wend with him alone
 At length, that middle course to steer,
 To cov'ndice and craft to steer,
 "His charge," he said, "would ill allow
 His absence from the fortress now,
 Wilfrid on Bertram should attend,
 His son should journey with his friend!"—

- 23 Contempt kept Bertram's anger down,
 And wreathed to savage smile his frown
 ' Wilfrid, or thou— is one to me,
 Whichever bears the golder key
 Yet think not but I mark, and smite
 To mark thy poor and selfish wile
 If injury from me you fear,
 What, Oswald Wicliffe, shield, thee here?
 I've sprung from walls more high than these,
 I've swam through deeper streams than Leers.
 Might I not stab thee, ere one yell
 Could rouse the distant sentinel?
 Start not—it is not my design,
 But, if it were, weak fence were thine,
 And, trust me, that, in time of need,
 This hand hath done more desperate deed—
 Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son,
 Time calls, and I must needs be gone!"—

- 24 Nought of his sire's ungenerous part
 Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart,
 A heart, too soft from early life
 To hold with fortune needful strife
 His sire, while yet a hardier race
 Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace
 On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand,
 For feeble heart and forceless hand,
 But a fond mother's care and joy
 Were centred in her sickly boy
 No touch of childhood's frolic mood
 Showed the elastic spring of blood,
 Hour after hour he loved to pore
 On Shakspeare's rich and varied lore,
 But turned from martial scenes and light,
 From Falstaff's feast and Percy's fight,
 To ponder Jiques' moral strain,
 And muse with Hamlet, wise in vain,
 And weep himself to soft repose
 O'er gentle Desdemona's woes
- 25 In youth he sought not pleasures found
 By youth in horse, and hawk, and hound,
 But loved the quiet joys that wake

By lonely stream and silent lake,
In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
Where all is cliff, and copse, and sky,
To climb Catcottle's dizzy peak,
On lone Pendragon's mound to seek
Such was his wont, and there his dream
Soared on some wild fantastic theme,
Of faithful love, or ceaseless Spring,
Till Contemplation's wearied wing
The enthusiast could no more sustain,
And sad he sunk to earth again

26 He loved—as many a lay can tell,
Preserved in Stranmore's lonely dell,
For his was minstrel's skill, he caught
The art unteachable, untaught,
He loved—his soul did nature flame
For love, and fancy nursed the flame,
Vainly he loved—for seldom swam
Of such soft mould is loved again,
Silent he loved—in every gaze
Was passion, friendship in his phase.
So mused his life away—till died
His brethren all, then father's pride
Wilfrid is now the only heir
Of all his stratagems and care,
And destined, dreading, to pursue
Ambition's maze by Oswald's clue

27 Wilfrid must love and woo the bright
Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight
To love her was an easy quest,
The secret empress of his breast,
To woo her was a harder task
To one that durst not hope or ask
Yet all Matilda could, she gave
In pity to her gentle slave,
Friendship, esteem, and fair regard,
And praise, the poet's best reward
She read the tales his taste approved,
And sung the lays he framed or loved,
Yet, loth to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favouring glance to friendship due,
Then grieved to see her victim's pain
And gave the dangerous smiles again

28 So did the suit of Wilfrid stand,
When war's loud summons waked the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the Tees,
The woe-foreboding peasant sees,
In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion bold;

Browning defiance in their pride,
 Their vassals now and lords divide
 From his fair hall on Greta banks,
 The Knight of Rokeby led his rills,
 To aid the valiant northern Fair
 Who drew the sword for royal Charles
 Mortham, by marriage near the 1,—
 His sister had been Rokeby's bride,
 Though long before the civil fray
 In peaceful grave the lady lay,—
 Philip of Mortham raised his band,
 And marched at Fairfax's command,
 While Wycliffe, bound by many a train
 Of kindred art with vily Vane,
 Less prompt to brave the bloody field,
 Made Barnard's battlements his shield,
 Secured them with his Landed powers,
 And for the Commons held the towers

- 29 The lovely heir of Rokeby's knight
 Waits in the halls the event of fight,
 For England's war revered the clum
 Of every unprotected name,
 And spared, amid its fiercest rage,
 Childhood and womanhood and age
 But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
 Must the dear privilege forego,
 By Greta's side, in evening gray,
 To steal upon Matilda's way,
 Striving, with fond hypocrisy,
 For careless step and vacant eye,
 Calming each anxious look and glance
 To give the meeting all to chance,
 Or framing as a fair excuse,
 The book, the pencil, or the muse,
 Something to give, to sing, to say,
 Some modern tale, some ancient lay
 Then, while the longed-for minutes last,—
 Ah! minutes quickly over-passed!—
 Recording each expression free
 Of kind or careless courtesy,
 Each friendly look, each softer tone,
 As food for fancy when alone
 All this is o'er—but still, unseen,
 Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood green,
 To watch Matilda's wonted round,
 While springs his heart at every sound
 She comes!—'tis but a passing sight,
 Yet serves to cheat his weary night,
 She comes not—He will wait the hour,
 When her lamp lightens in the tower,
 'Tis something yet, if, as she passed,

Her shade is o'er the lattice cast
 "What is my life, my hope?" he said,
 "Alas! a transitory shade"—

30 Thus wore his life, though reason strove
 For mastery in vain with love,
 Forcing upon his thoughts the sum
 Of present woe and ills to come,
 While still he turned impatient ear
 From Truth's intrusive voice severe
 Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
 In all but this, unmoved he viewed
 Each outward change of ill and good.
 But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and mild,
 Was Fancy's spoiled and wayward child;
 In her bright car she bade him ride,
 With one fair form to grace his side,
 Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
 Flung her high spells around his seat,
 Bathed in her dews his languid head,
 Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
 For him her opiates gave to flow,
 Which he who tastes, can ne'er forego,
 And placed him in her circle, free
 From every stern reality,
 Till, to the Visionary, seem
 Her day dreams truth, and truth a dream.

31. Woe to the youth whom Fancy gains,
 Winning from Reason's hand the reins,
 Pity and woe! for such a mind
 Is soft, contemplative, and kind,
 And woe to those who train such youth,
 And spare to press the rights of truth,
 The mind to strengthen and annel,
 While on the stithy glows the steel!
 O teach him, while your lessons last,
 To judge the present by the past,
 Remind him of each wish pursued,
 How rich it glowed with promised good;
 Remind him of each wish enjoyed,
 How soon his hopes possession cloyed!
 Tell him, we play unequal game,
 Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's aim
 And, ere he strip him for her race
 Show the conditions of the chase
 Two Sisters by the goal are set,
 Cold Disappointment and Regret.
 One disenchant the winner's eyes,
 And strips of all its worth the prize,
 While one augments its grudy show
 More to enhance the loser's woe.
 The victor sees his fairy gold,

Transformed, when won, to drossy mold,
But still the vanquished mourns his loss,
And rues, as gold, that glittering dross

- 32 More wouldst thou know — yon tower survey,
Yon couch unpressed since parting day,
Yon untrimmed lamp, whose yellow gleam
Is mingling with the cold moonbeam,
And yon thin form! — the hectic red
On his pale cheek unequal spread
The head reclined, the loosened hair,
The limbs relaxed, the mournful air —
See, he looks up, — a woful smile
Lightens his woe-worn cheek a while, —
'Tis Fancy wakes some idle thought,
To gild the ruin she has wrought;
For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
Her pinions fan the wound she makes,
And soothing thus the dreamer's pain,
She drinks his life-blood from the vein.
Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
Van hope! to see the sun arise
The moon with clouds is still o'ercast;
Still howls by fits the stormy blast,
Another hour must wear away,
Ere the East kindle into day,
And, hark! to waste that weary hour,
He tries the minstrel's magic power.

SONG

To the Moon

- 33 Hail to thy cold and clouded beam,
Pale pilgrim of the troubled sky!
Hail, though the mists that o'er thee stream
Lend to thy brow their sullen dye!
How should thy pure and peerless eye
Untroubled view our scenes below,
Or how a tearless beam supply
To light a world of war and woe!
- Fair Queen! I will not blame thee now,
As once by Greta's fairy side,
Each little cloud that dimmed thy brow
Did then an angel's beauty hide
And of the shades I then could chide,
Still are the thoughts to memory dear,
For, while a softer strain I tried,
They hid my blush, and calmed my fear
- Then did I swear thy ray serene
Was formed to light some lonely dell,
By two fond lovers only seen,
Reflected from the crystal well,

Or sleeping on their mossy cell,
Or quivering on the lattice bright,
Or glancing on their couch, to tell
How swiftly wanes the summer night?

34. He starts—a step at this lone hour!
A voice!—his father seeks the tower,
With haggard look and troubled sense,
Fresh from his dreadful conference
“Wilfrid!—what, not to sleep addressed?
Thou hast no cares to chase thy rest
Mortham has fallen on Marston-moor
Bertram brings warrant to secure
His treasures, bought by spoil and blood,
For the state’s use and public good
The menials will thy voice obey,
Let his commission have its way,
In every point, in every word”—
Then, in a whisper,—“Take thy sword!
Bertram is—what I must not tell
I hear his hasty step—farewell!”

CANTO SECOND

1. FAR in the chambers of the west,
The gale had sighed itself to rest,
The moon was cloudless now and clear,
But pale, and soon to disappear
The thin gray clouds waxed dimly light
On Brusleton and Houghton height,
And the rich dale, that eastward lay,
Waited the wakening touch of day,
To give its woods and cultured plain,
And towers and spires, to light again
But, westward, Stanmore’s shapeless swell,
And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-fell,
And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
And Arkingaith, lay dark afar,
While, as a livelier twilight falls,
Emerge proud Barnard’s bannered walls
High crowned he sits, in dawning pale,
The sovereign of the lovely vale
2. What prospects, from the watch-tower high,
Gleam gradual on the warder’s eye!—
Far sweeping to the east, he sees
Down his deep woods the course of Tees,
And tracks his wanderings by the steam
Of summer vapours from the stream,
And ere he pace his destined hour
By Brackenbury’s dungeon-tower,
These silver mists shall melt away,
And dew the woods with glittering spray

Then in broad lustre shall he be seen
 That mighty trench of living stone,
 And each huge trunk that, from the side,
 Reclines him o'er the darksome tide,
 Where Tees, full many a fathom deep,
 Wears with his rage no common sleep;
 For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed here,
 Nor clay-mound, check his fierce career,
 Condemned to mine & channelled way,
 O'er solid sheets of marble gray

3. Nor Tees alone, in dawning bright,
 Shall rush upon the ravished sight,
 But many a tributary stream
 Rich from its own dark dell shall gleam.
 Staindrop, who, from her sylvan bowers
 Salutes proud Raby's battled towers;
 The rural brook of Eglstone,
 And Balder, named from Odin's son,
 And Greta, to whose banks ere long
 We lead the lovers of the song,
 And silver Lune, from Stanmore wild,
 And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring child,
 And last and least, but loveliest still,
 Romantic Deepdale's slender rill
 Who in that dim-wood glen hath strayed,
 Yet longed for Roslin's magic glade?
 Who, wandering there, hath sought to change,
 Even for that vale so stern and strange,
 Where Cartland's Crag, fantastic rent,
 Through her green copse like spires are sent?
 Yet, Albin, yet the prize be thine,
 Thy scenes and story to combine!
 Thou bidd'st him, who by Roslin strays,
 List to the deeds of other days,
 'Mid Cartland's Crag thou show'st the cave
 The refuge of thy champion brave,
 Giving each rock its storied tale,
 Pouring a lay for every dale,
 Knitting, as with a moral bind,
 Thy native legends with thy land,
 To lend each scene the interest high
 Which genius beams from beauty's eye
- 4 Bertram awaited not the sight
 Which sunrise shows from Barnard's height,
 But from the towers, preventing day,
 With Wilfrid took his early way,
 While misty dawn, and moonbeam pale,
 Still mingled in the silent dale
 By Barnard's bridge of stately stone,
 The southern bank of Tees they won,
 Their winding path then eastward cast,

And Eglistone's gray runs passed,
 Each on his own deep visions bent,
 Silent and sad they onward went
 Well may you think that Bertram's mood,
 To Wilfrid savage seemed and rude,
 Well may you think bold Risingham
 Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and tame,
 And small the intercourse, I ween,
 Such uncongenial souls between

5 Stern Bertram shunned the nearer way,
 Through Rokeby's park and chase that lay,
 And, skirting high the valley's ridge,
 They crossed by Greta's ancient bridge,
 Descending where her waters wind
 Free for a space and unconfined,
 As, 'scaped from Brignal's dark wood glen,
 She seeks wild Mortham's deeper den
 There, as his eye glanced o'er the mound,
 Raised by that Legion long renowned,
 Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
 Of pious, faithful, conquering fame,
 "Stern sons of war!" sad Wilfrid sighed,
 "Behold the boast of Roman pride!
 What now of all your toils are known?
 A grassy trench, a broken stone!"—
 This to himself, for moral strain
 To Bertram were addressed in vain

6 Of different mood, a deeper sigh
 Awoke, when Rokeby's turrets high
 Were northward in the dawning seen
 To rear them o'er the thicket green
 O then, though Spenser's self had strayed
 Beside him through the lovely glade,
 Lending his rich luxuriant glow
 Of Fancy, all its charms to show,
 Pointing the stream rejoicing free,
 As captive set at liberty,
 Flushing her sparkling waves abroad,
 And clamouring joyful on her road,
 Pointing where, up the sunny banks,
 The trees retire in scattered ranks,
 Save where, advanced before the rest,
 On knoll or hillock rears his crest,
 Lonely and huge, the giant Oak,
 As champions, when their band is broke,
 Stand forth to guard the rearward post,
 The bulwark of the scattered host—
 All this, and more, might Spenser say
 Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
 While Wilfrid eyed the distant tower,
 Whose lattice lights Matilda's bower

- 7 The open vale is soon pursed o'er,
 Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no more;
 Sinking 'mid Greta's thickets deep,
 A wild and darker course they keep,
 A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
 As e'er the foot of Minstrel trode!
 Broad shadows o'er their passage fell,
 Deeper and narrower grew the dell,
 It seemed some mountain rent an river
 A channel for the stream had given,
 So high the cliffs of limestone gray
 Hung beetling o'er the torrent's way,
 Yielding, along their rugged base,
 A slinty footpath's niggard space,
 Where he, who winds 't'wart rock and wave,
 May hear the headlong torrent rave,
 And like a steed in frantic fit,
 That flings the froth from curb and bit,
 May view her chase her waves to spray,
 O'er every rock that bars her way,
 Till foam globes on her eddies ride,
 Thick as the schemes of human pride,
 That down life's current drive amain,
 As frail, as frothy, and as vain!
- 8 The cliffs that rear their haughty head
 High o'er the river's darksome bed
 Were now all naked, wild, and gray,
 Now waving all with greenwood spray,
 Here trees to every crevice clung,
 And o'er the dell their branches hung;
 And there, all splintered and uneven,
 The shivered rocks ascend to heaven;
 Oft, too, the ivy swathed their breast,
 And wreathed its garland round their crest,
 Or from the spires bade loosely flare
 Its tendrils in the middle air
 As pennons wont to wave of old
 O'er the high feast of Baron bold,
 When revelled loud the feudal rout,
 And the arched halls returned then shout
 Such and more wild is Greta's roar,
 And such the echoes from her shore
 And so the rived banners' gleam
 Waved wildly o'er the brawling stream
- 9 Now from the stream the rocks recede,
 But leave between no sunny mead,
 No, nor the spot of pebbly sand,
 Oft found by such a mountain strand;
 Forming such warm and dry retreat,
 As fancy deems the lonely seat,
 Where hermit, wandering from his cell,

His rosary might love to tell
 But here, 'twixt rock and river grew
 A dismal grove of sable yew,
 With whose sad tints were mingled seen
 The blighted fir's sepulchral green
 Seemed that the trees their shadows cast
 The earth that nourished them to blast,
 For never knew that swarthy grove
 The verdant hue that fairies love,
 Nor wilding green, nor woodland flower,
 Arose within its baleful bower,
 The dank and sable earth receives
 Its only carpet from the leaves,
 That from the withering branches cast,
 Bestrewed the ground with every blast
 Though now the sun was o'er the hill,
 In this dark spot 'twas twilight still,
 Save that on Giet's farther side
 Some straggling beams through copsewood glide.
 And wild and savage contrast made
 That dingle's deep and funeral shade,
 With the bright tints of early day,
 Which, glimmering through the ivy spray,
 On the opposing summit lay

- 10 The lated peasant shunned the dell,
 For Superstition wont to tell
 Of many a grisly sound and sight,
 Scaring its path at dead of night
 When Christmas logs blaze high and wide,
 Such wonders speed the festal tide,
 While Curiosity and Fear,
 Pleasure and Pain, sit crouching near,
 Till childhood's cheek no longer glows,
 And village maidens lose the rose
 The thrilling interest rises higher,
 The circle closes high and higher,
 And shuddering glance is cast behind,
 As louder moans the wintry wind
 Believe, that fitting scene was laid
 For such wild tales in Mortham glade;
 For who had seen on Giet's side,
 By that dim light fierce Bertram stride,
 In such a spot, at such an hour,—
 If touched by Superstition's power,
 Might well have deemed that Hell had given
 A murderer's ghost to upper heaven,
 While Wilfrid's form had seemed to glide
 Like his pale victim by his side

11. Nor think to village swains alone
 Are these unearthly terrors known,
 For not to rank nor sex confined

Is this vain ague of the mind
 Hearts firm as steel, as marble hard,
 'Gunst faith, and love, and pity bent,
 Have quaked, like aspen leaves in May,
 Beneath its universal sway
 Bertram had listed many a tale
 Of wonder in his native dale,
 That in his secret soul retained
 The credence they in childhood gained,
 Nor less his wild adventurous youth
 Believed in every legend's truth,
 Learned when, beneath the tropic gale,
 Full swelled the vessel's steady sail
 And the broad Indian moon her light
 Poured on the watch of middle night,
 When seamen love to hear and tell
 Of portent, prodigy, and spell,
 What gales are told on Lapland's shore,
 How whistle rush bids tempests roar,
 Of witch, of mermaid, and of sprite,
 Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light,
 Or of that Phantom Ship, whose form
 Shoots like a meteor through the storm;
 When the dark scud comes driving hard,
 And lowered is every top sail yard,
 And canvas, wove in earthly looms,
 No more to brave the storm presumes!
 Then 'mid the war of sea and sky,
 Top and top gallant hoisted high,
 Full spread and crowded every sail,
 The Demon Frigate braves the gale;
 And well the doomed spectators know
 The harbinger of wreck and woe

- 12 Then, too, were told, in stifled tone,
 Marvels and omens all their own,
 How, by some desert isle or key,
 Where Spaniards wrought their cruelty,
 Or where the savage pirate's mood
 Repaid it home in deeds of blood,
 Strange nightly sounds of woe and fear
 Appalled the listening buccaneer,
 Whose light-armed shallop anchored lay
 In ambush by the lonely bay
 The groan of grief, the shriek of pain,
 Ring from the moonlight groves of cane,
 The fierce adventurer's heart they scare,
 Who weaves memory for a prayer,
 Curses the roadstead, and with gale
 Of early morning lifts the sail,
 To give, in thirst of blood and prey,
 A legend for another bay

13 Thus, as a man, a youth, a child
 Trained in the mystic and the wild,
 With this on Bertram's soul at times
 Rushed a dark feeling of his crimes,
 Such to his troubled soul their form
 As the pale death-ship to the storm,
 And such their omen dim and dread
 As shrieks and voices of the dead
 That pang, whose transitory force
 Hovered 'twixt horror and remorse,
 That pang, perchance, his bosom pressed,
 As Wilfrid sudden he addressed —
 "Wilfrid, this glen is never trod
 Until the sun rides high abroad,
 Yet twice have I beheld to day
 A form, that seemed to dog our way
 Twice from my glance it seemed to flee
 And shroud itself by cliff or tree
 How think'st thou?—Is our path way-laid?
 Or hath thy sire my trust betrayed?
 If so"—Ere, starting from his dream,
 That turned upon a gentler theme,
 Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
 Bertram sprung forward, shouting high,
 "Whate'er thou art, thou now shalt stand!"
 And forth he darted, sword in hand

14 As bursts the levin in its wrath,
 He shot him down the sounding path,
 Rock, wood, and stream, rung wildly out,
 To his loud step and savage shout.
 Seems that the object of his race
 Hath scaled the cliffs, his frantic chase
 Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis bent
 Right up the rock's tall battlement;
 Straining each sinew to ascend,
 Foot, hand, and knee, their aid must lend.
 Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay,
 Views from beneath his dreadful way,
 Now to the oak's warped roots he clings,
 Now trusts his weight to ivy strings,
 Now, like the wild goat, must he dare
 An unsupported leap in air
 Hid in the shrubby ram-course now,
 You mark him by the crashing bough,
 And by his corslet's sullen clank
 And by the stones spurned from the bank,
 And by the hawk scared from her nest,
 And ravens creaking o'er their guest,
 Who deem his forfeit limbs shall pay
 The tribute of his bold essay.

15 See, he emerges—desperate now

All farther course—Yon beetling brow,
 In craggy nakedness sublime,
 What heart or foot shall dare to climb?
 It bears no tendril for his clasp,
 Presents no angle to his grasp,
 Sole stay his foot may rest upon,
 Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone
 Balanced on such precarious prop,
 He strains his grasp to reach the top
 Just as the dangerous stretch he makes,
 By heaven, his faithless footstool shakes!
 Beneath his tottering bulk it bends,
 It sways, it loosens, it descends!
 And downward holds its headlong way,
 Crashing o'er rock and copsewood spray
 Loud thunders shake the echoing dell!—
 Fell it alone?—alone it fell
 Just on the very verge of fate,
 The hardy Bertram's falling weight
 He trusted to his sinewy hands,
 And on the top unharmed he stands!

16. Wilfrid a safer path pursued,
 At intervals where, roughly hewed,
 Rude steps ascending from the dell
 Rendered the cliffs accessible
 By circuit slow he thus attained
 The height that Risingham had gazed,
 And when he issued from the wood,
 Before the gate of Mortham stood
 'Twas a fair scene! the sunbeam lay
 On battled tower and portal gray,
 And from the grassy slope he sees
 The Greta flow to meet the Tees,
 Where, issuing from her darksome bed,
 She caught the morning's eastern red,
 And through the softening vale below
 Rolled her bright waves, in rosy glow,
 All blushing, to her bridal bed,
 Like some shy maid in convent bred,
 While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay,
 Sing forth her nuptial roundelay
17. 'Twas sweetly sung that roundelay,
 That summer morn shone blithe and gay;
 But morning beam, and wild-bird's call,
 Awaked not Mortham's silent hall
 No porter, by the low-browed gate,
 Look in the wonted niche his seat,
 To the paved court no peasant drew,
 Waked to their toil no menial crew,
 The maiden's carol was not heard,
 As to her morning task she fared

In the void offices around,
 Rung not a hoof, nor bayed a hound,
 Nor eager steed, with shrilling neigh,
 Accused the lagging groom's delay,
 Untrimmed, undressed, neglected now,
 Was alleys walk and orchard bough,
 All spoke the master's absent care,
 All spoke neglect and disrepair
 South of the gate, an arrow flight,
 Two mighty elms their limbs unite,
 As if a canopy, to spread
 O'er the lone dwelling of the dead,
 For their huge boughs in arches bent
 Above a massive monument,
 Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise,
 With many a scutcheon and device
 There, spent with toil and sunk in gloom
 Bertram stood pondering by the tomb.

- 18 "It vanished like a flitting ghost"
 Behind this tomb," he said, "'twas lost—
 This tomb, where oft I deemed lies stowed
 Of Mortham's Indian wealth the hoard.
 'Tis true, the aged servants said
 Here his lamented wife is laid,
 But weightier reasons may be guessed
 For their lord's strict and stern behest,
 That none should on his steps intrude
 Whene'er he sought this solitude —
 An ancient mariner I knew,
 What time I sailed with Moigan's crew
 Who oft, 'mid our carousals, spoke
 Of Raleigh, Forbisher, and Drake,
 Adventurous hearts! who bartered, bold,
 Their English steel for Spanish gold
 Trust not, would his experience say,
 Captain or comrade with your prey,
 But seek some charnel, when, at full,
 The moon gilds skeleton and skull
 There dig, and turn your precious heap,
 And bid the dead your treasure keep,
 Sure stewards they, if fitting spell
 Their service to the task compel
 Lacks there such charnel?—kill a slave
 Or prisoner, on the treasure-grave,
 And bid his discontented ghost
 Stalk nightly on his lonely post —
 Such was his tale Its truth, I ween
 Is in my morning vision seen"—

- 19 Wilfrid, who scorned the legend wild,
 In mingled mirth and pity smiled,
 Much marvelling that a breast so bold

In such fond tale belief should hold;
 But yet of Bertram sought to know
 The apparition's form and show. —
 The power within the guilty brain
 Oft vanquished, never quite suppressed,
 That unsubdued and luring lies,
 To take the felon by surprise,
 And force him, as by magic spell,
 In his despite his guilt to tell, —
 That power in Bertram's breast awoke.
 Scarce conscious he was heard the spell
 " 'Twas Mortham's son, from foot to head!
 His morion, with the plume of red,
 His shape, his mien — 'twas Mortham, right
 As when I slew him in the fight." —
 "Thou slay him? — thou?" — With conscious start
 He heard, then manned his mighty heart —
 "I slew him? — I! — I had forgot
 Thou, stripling, knew'st not of the plot
 But it is spoken — nor will I
 Deed done, or spoken word, deny
 I slew him, I! for thankless pride, —
 'Twas by this hand that Mortham died."

- 20 Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
 Averse to every active part,
 But most averse to martial broil,
 From danger shrunk, and turned from toil,
 Yet the meek lover of the lyre
 Nursed one brave spark of noble fire,
 Against injustice, fraud, or wrong,
 His blood beat high, his hand waxed strong.
 Not his the nerves that could sustain
 Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain,
 But, when that spark blazed forth to flame,
 He rose superior to his frame
 And now it came, that generous mood,
 And, in full current of his blood,
 On Bertram he laid desperate hand,
 Placed firm his foot, and drew his brand
 "Should every fiend, to whom thou'rt sold,
 Rise in thine aid, I keep my hold —
 Arouse there, ho! take spear and sword!
 Attack the murderer of your lord!"
- 21 A moment fixed, as by a spell,
 Stood Bertram — it seemed miracle,
 That one so feeble, soft, and tame,
 Set grasp on warlike Risingham
 But when he felt a feeble stroke,
 The fiend within the ruffian woke!
 To wrench the sword from Wilfrid's hand,
 To dash him headlong on the sand,

Was but one moment's work,—one more
 Had drenched the blade in Wilfrid's gore;
 But, in the instant it arose,
 To end his life, his love, his woes,
 A warlike Form, that marked the scene,
 Presents his rapier sheathed between,
 Parries the fast-descending blow,
 And steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his foe,
 Nor then unscribbarded his brand,
 But, sternly pointing with his hand,
 With monarch's voice forbade the fight,
 And motioned Bertram from his sight
 "Go, and repent,"—he said, "while time
 Is given thee, add not crime to crime"—

22 Mute, and uncertain, and amazed,
 As on a vision, Bertram gazed
 'Twas Mortham's bearing, bold and high,
 His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
 His look and accent of command,
 The martial gesture of his hand,
 His stately form, spare-built and tall,
 His war-bleached locks—'twas Mortham all
 Through Bertram's dizzy brain career
 A thousand thoughts, and all of fear,
 His wavering faith received not quite
 The form he saw as Mortham's spite,
 But more he feared it, if it stood
 His lord, in living flesh and blood —
 What specter can the charnel send,
 So dreadful as an injured friend?
 Then, too, the habit of command,
 Used by the leader of the band,
 When Risingham, for many a day,
 Had marched and fought beneath his sway,
 Timed him—and, with reverted face,
 Backwards he bore his sullen pace,
 Oft stopped, and oft on Mortham stared,
 And dark as rated mastiff glared,
 But when the tramp of steeds was heard,
 Plunged in the glen, and disappeared
 Nor longer there the warrior stood,
 Retiring eastward through the wood;
 But first to Wilfrid warning gives,
 "Tell thou to none that Mortham lives"

23 Still rung these words in Wilfrid's ear,
 Hinting he knew not what of fear,
 When nearer came the coursers' tread,
 And, with his father at their head,
 Of horsemen armed a gallant power
 Reined up their steeds before the tower
 "Whence these pale looks, my son?" he said

"Where's Bertram? Why that naked ol'-de?"—
 Wilfrid ambiguously replied,
 (For Mortham's charge his honour tied)
 "Bertram is gone—the villain's word
 Avouched him murderer of his lord!
 Even now we sought—but, when your tread
 Announced you nigh, the felon fled."—
 In Wychiffe's conscious eye appear
 A guilty hope, a guilty fear,
 On his pale brow the dew drop l'roke,
 And his lip quivered as he spoke,—

- 24 "A murderer!—Philip Mortham died
 Amid the battle's wildest tide
 Wilfrid, or Bertram raves, or you!
 Yet, grant such strange confession true,
 Pursuit were vain—let him fly far—
 Justice must sleep in civil war!"—
 A gallant youth rode near his side,
 Brave Rokley's page, in battle tried,
 That morn, in embassy of weight
 He brought to Barnard's castle gate,
 And followed now in Wychiffe's train,
 An answer for his lord to gain
 His steed, whose arched and sable neck,
 A hundred wreaths of foam bedeck,
 Chafed not against the curb more high
 Than he at Oswald's cold reply,
 He bit his lip, implored his saint,
 (His the old faith)—then burst restraint.
- 25 "Yes! I beheld his bloody fall,
 By that base traitor's dastard ball,
 Just when I thought to measure sword,
 Presumptuous hope! with Mortham's lord.
 And shall the murderer 'scape, who slew
 His leader generous, brave, and true?
 Escape! while on the dew you trace
 The marks of his gigantic pace?
 No! ere the sun that dew shall dry,
 False Risingham shall yield or die—
 Ring out the Castle 'lrum bell!
 Arouse the peasants with the knell!
 Meantime, disperse—ride, gallants, ride!
 Beset the wood on every side
 But if among you one there be,
 That honours Mortham's memory,
 Let him dismount and follow me!
 Else on your crest sit fear and shame,
 And foul suspicion dog your name!"
- 26 Instant to earth young Redmond sprung,
 Instant on earth the harness rung
 Of twenty men of Wychiffe's band,

Who waited not their lord's command
 Redmond his spurs from buskins drew,
 His mantle from his shoulders threw,
 His pistols in his belt he placed,
 The green-wood grained, the footsteps traced,
 Shouted like huntsman to his hounds,
 "To cover, hark!" and in he bounds
 Scarce heard was Oswald's anxious cry,
 "Suspicion!—yes—pursue him—fly—
 But venture not, in useless strife,
 On ruffian desperate of his life
 Whoever finds him, shoot him dead!
 Five hundred nobles for his head!"

27 The horsemen galloped to make good
 Each path that issued from the wood
 Loud from the thickets rung the shout
 Of Redmond and his eager rout,
 With them was Wilfrid, stung with ire,
 And envying Redmond's martial fire,
 And emulous of fame—But where
 Is Oswald, noble Mortham's heir?
 He, bound by honour, law, and faith,
 Avenger of his kinsman's death?—
 Leaning against the elmin tree,
 With drooping head and slackened knee,
 And clenched teeth, and close-clasped hands,
 In agony of soul he stands!
 His downcast eye on earth is bent,
 His soul to every sound is lent,
 For in each shout that cleaves the air,
 May ring discovery and despair

28 What 'vailed it him, that brightly played
 The morning sun on Mortham's glade?
 All seems in giddy round to ride,
 Like objects on a stormy tide,
 Seen eddying by the moonlight dim,
 Imperfectly to sink and swim
 What 'vailed it, that the fair domain,
 Its battled mansion, hill and plain,
 On which the sun so brightly shone,
 Envied so long, was now his own?
 The lowest dungeon, in that hour,
 Of Brackenbury's dismal tower,
 Had been his choice, could such a doom
 Have opened Mortham's bloody tomb!
 Forced, too, to turn unwilling ear
 To each surmise of hope or fear,
 Murmured among the rustics round,
 Who gathered at the 'rum sound,
 He dared not turn his head away,
 Even to look up to heaven to pray,

- Or call on hell, in bitter mood,
For one sharp death-shot from the world !
- 29 At length o'erprised that dreadful space,
Back straggling came the scattered chase ;
Faded and weary, horse and man,
Returned the troopers, one by one—
Wilfrid, the last, arrived to say,
All trace was lost of Beatrix's way,
Though Redmond still, up Beaulieu valley,
The hopeless quest in vain pursued —
O, fatal doom of human race !
What tyrant passions passion chase !
Remorse from Oswald's brow is gone,
Avarice and pride resume their throne ;
The pang of instant terror by,
They dictate thus their slave's reply
- 30 " Ay—let him range like hasty hound !
And if the grim wolf's fur be found,
Small is my care how goes the game
With Redmond, or with Risingham
Nay, answer not, thou simple boy !
Thy fair Matilda, all so coy
To thee, is of another mood
To that bold youth of Erin's blood
Thy ditties will she freely praise,
And pay thy pains with courtly phrase
In a rough path will oft command—
Accept at least—thy friendly hand ;
His she avoids, or, urged and pried,
Unwilling takes his proffered aid,
While conscious passion plainly speaks
In downcast look and blushing cheeks
Whene'er he sings, will she glide nigh,
And all her soul is in her eye,
Yet doubts she still to tender free
The wonted words of courtesy
These are strong signs !—yet wherefore sigh
And wive, effeminate, thine eye ?
Thine shall she be, if thou attend
The counsels of thy sire and friend
- 31 " Scarce wert thou gone, when peep of light
Brought genuine news of Marston's fight
Brave Cromwell turned the doubtful tide,
And conquest blessed the rightful side,
Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
Rupert and that bold Marquis fled,
Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate
Of these, committed to my charge,
Is Rokeby, prisoner at large,
Redmond, his page, arrived to say

He reaches Barnud's towers to-day
 Right heavy shall his ransom be,
 Unless that maid compound with thee '
 Go to her now—be bold of cheer,
 While her soul floats 'twixt hope and fear '
 It is the very change of tide,
 When best the female heart is tied—
 Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
 Are in the current swept to sea,
 And the bold swain, who plies his oar
 May lightly row his bark to shore "

CANTO THIRD

- 1 THE hunting tribes of an and earth
 Respect the brethren of their birth
 Nature, who loves the clum of kind,
 Less cruel chase to each assigned
 The falcon, poised on soaring wing,
 Watches the wild-duck by the spring,
 The slow-hound wakes the fox's den,
 The greyhound presses on the hare,
 The eagle pounces on the lamb,
 The wolf devours the fleecy dam,
 Ev'n tiger fell, and sullen bear,
 Their likeness and their lineage spare.
 Man, only, mars kind Nature's plan,
 And turns the fierce pursuit on man '
 Plying war's desultory trade,
 Incursion, flight, and ambuscade,
 Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty son,
 At first the bloody game begun
- 2 The Indian, prowling for his prey,
 Who hears the settlers track his way,
 And knows in distant forest far
 Camp his red brethren of the war,
 He, when each double and disguise
 To baffle the pursuit he tries,
 Low crouching now his head to hide,
 Where swampy streams through rushes glide,
 Now covering with the withered leaves
 The foot-prints that the dew receives,
 He, skilled in every sylvan guile,
 Knows not, nor tries, such various wile
 As Risingham, when on the wind
 Arose the loud pursuit behind
 In Redesdale his youth had heard
 Each art her wily da'esmen dard
 When Rook-edge, and Red-warugh,
 To bugle rung and bloodhound's cry,
 Announcing Jedwood axe and spear,

And I ud's late rulers in the rear,
And well his venturous life had proved
The lessons that his childhood loved

3. Oft had he shown in climes afar,
Each attribute of roving war;
'The sharpened ear, the piercing eye,
'The quick resolve in danger nigh,
'The speed, that in the flight or chase
Outstripped the Charib's rapid race;
The steady brain, the sinewy limb,
To leap, to climb, to dive, to swim,
The iron frame, mured to bear
Each dire inclemency of air
Nor less confirmed to undergo
Fatigue's faint chill, and famine's throes
These arts he proved, his life to save
In peril oft by land and wave,
On Arwaca's desert shore,
Or where La Plata's billows roar,
When oft the sons of vengeful Spain
Tracked the marauder's steps in vain
These arts, in Indian warfare tried,
Must save him now by Gretz's side
4. 'Twas then, in hour of utmost need,
He proved his courage, art, and speed.
Now slow he stalked with stealthy pace
Now started forth in rapid race,
Oft doubling back in mazy train,
To blind the trace the deers refrain,
Now climb the rock's projecting high,
To baffle the pursuer's eye,
Now sought the stream, whose brawling sound
The echo of his foot-steps drowned
But if the forest verge he nears,
There trample steeds, and glimmer spears,
If deeper down the copse he drew,
He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
Beating each cover while they came,
As if to start the sylvan game
'Twas then,—like tiger close beset
At every pass with toil and net,
'Countered where'er he turns his glare,
By clashing arms and torches' flare,
Who meditates, with furious bound,
To burst on hunter, horse, and hound,
'Twas then that Bertram's soul arose,
Prompting to rush upon his foes
But as that crouching tiger, cowed
By brandished steel and shouting crowd
Retreats beneath the jungle's shroud,
Bertram suspends his purpose stern

And crouches in the brake and fern,
Hiding his feet, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye

- 5 Then Bertram might the bearing trace
Of the bold youth who led the chase,
Who paused to list for every sound,
Climbed every height to look around,
Then rising on with naked sword,
Each dingle's bosky depths explored
'Twas Redmoor—by the azure eye,
'Twas Redmond—by the looks that fly
Disordered from his glowing cheek,
Mien, face, and form, young Redmond speak
A form more active, light, and strong,
Ne'er shot the ranks of war along,
The modest, yet the manly mien,
Might grace the court of maiden queen
A face more fair you well might find,
For Redmond's knew the sun and wind,
Nor boasted, from their tinge when free,
The charm of regularity,
But every feature had the power
To aid the expression of the hour
Whether gay wit, and humour shy,
Danced laughing in his light-blue eye
Or banded brow and glance of fire,
And kindling cheek, spoke Erin's ire,
Or soft and saddened glances show
Her ready sympathy with woe,
Or in that wary mood of mind,
When various feelings are combined,
When joy and sorrow mingle near,
And hope's bright wings are checked by fear
And rising doubts keep transport down,
And anger lends a short-lived frown,
In that strange mood which moods approve
Even when they dare not call it love,
With every change his features played,
As aspens show the light and shade

- 6 Well Risingham young Redmond knew,
And much he marvelled that the crew,
Roused to revenge bold Mortham dead,
Were by that Mortham's foeman led,
For never felt his soul the woe
That wails the generous foeman low,
Far less that sense of justice strong
That wrecks a generous foeman's wrong
But small his leisure now to pause,
Redmond is first, whate'er the cause
And twice that Redmond came so near
Where Bertram couched like hunted deer

The very boughs his steps displace
 Rustled against the ruffian's face,
 Who, desperate, twice prepared to start
 And plunge his dagger in his heart !
 But Redmond turned a different way,
 And the bent boughs resumed their sway,
 And Bertram held it wise, unseen,
 Deeper to plunge in coppice green
 Thus, coiled in his coil, the snake,
 When roving hunters beat the brake,
 Watches with red and glistening eye
 Prepared, if heedless step draw nigh,
 With forked tongue and venom'd fang
 Instant to dart the deadly pring,
 But if the intruders turn aside,
 Away his coils unfolded glide,
 And through the deep savannah wind,
 Some undisturbed retreat to find

- 7 But Bertram, as he backward drew,
 And heard the loud pursuit renew,
 And Redmond's halloo on the wind,
 Oft muttered in his savage mind—
 "Redmond O'Neale ! were thou and I
 Alone this day's event to try,
 With not a second here to see,
 But the gray cliff and oaken tree,—
 That voice of thine, that shouts so loud,
 Should ne'er repeat its summons proud !
 No ! nor e'er try its melting power
 Again in maiden's summer bower"—
 Eluded, now behind him die,
 Faint and more faint, each hostile cry,
 He stands in Scargill wood alone,
 Nor hears he now a harsher tone
 Than the hoarse cushat's plaintive cry,
 Or Greta's sound that murmurs by,
 And on the dale, so lone and wild,
 The summer sun in quiet smiled
- 8 He listened long with anxious heart,
 Ear bent to hear, and foot to start,
 And, while his stretched attention glows,
 Refused his weary frame repose
 'Twas silence all—he laid him down,
 Where purple heath profusely strown
 And throatwort with its azure bell,
 And moss and thyme his cushion swell,
 There, spent with toil, he listless eyed
 The course of Greta's playful tide,
 Beneath, her banks now eddying dun,
 Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
 As, dancing over rock and stone,

In yellow light her currents shone,
 Matching in hue the favourite gem
 Of Albin's mountain-dwelling
 Then, tired to watch the current's play,
 He turned his weary eyes away,
 To where the bank opposing showed
 Its huge, square cliffs through shaggy wood.
 One, prominent above the rest,
 Reared to the sun its pale gray breast,
 Around its broken summit grew
 The hazel rude, and sable yew,
 A thousand varied lichens dyed
 Its waste and weather-beaten side,
 And round its rugged basis lay,
 By time or thunder rent away,
 Fragments, that, from its frontlet torn,
 Were mantled now by verdant thorn
 Such was the scene's wild majesty,
 That filled stern Bertram's gazing eye

- 9 In sullen mood he lay reclined,
 Revolving, in his stormy mind,
 The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
 His patron's blood by treason spilt,
 A crime it seemed, so dire and dread,
 That it had power to wake the dead
 Then, pondering on his life betrayed
 By Oswald's art to Redmond's blade,
 In treacherous purpose to withhold,
 So seemed it, Northam's promised gold,
 A deep and full revenge he vowed
 On Redmond, forward, fierce, and proud;
 Revenge on Wilfrid—on his sire
 Redoubled vengeance, swift and due!—
 If, in such mood, (as legends say,
 And well believed that simple day,)
 The Enemy of Man has power
 To profit by the evil hour,
 Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
 His soul's redemption for revenge!
 But though his vows, with such a fire
 Of earnest and intense desire
 For vengeance dark and fell, were made,
 As well might reach hell's lowest shade,
 No deeper clouds the grove embrowned,
 No nether thunders shook the ground,
 The demon knew his vassal's heart,
 And spared temptation's needless art
- 10 Oft, mingled with the dreeful theme,
 Came Northam's form—Was it a dream?
 Or had he seen, in vision true,
 That very Northam whom he slew?

Or had in living flesh appeared
 The only man on earth he feared?—
 To try the mystic cruse intent,
 His eyes, that on the cliff were bent,
 'Countered at once a dazling glance,
 Like sunbeam flashed from sword or lance
 At once he started as for fight,
 But not a foeman was in sight,
 He heard the cushat's murmur hoarse,
 He heard the river's sounding course,
 The solitary woodlands lay,
 As slumbering in the summer ray
 He gazed, like lion roused, around,
 Then sunk again upon the ground
 'Twas but, he thought, some fitful beam,
 Glanced sudden from the sparkling stream
 Then plunged him in his gloomy train
 Of ill-connected thoughts again,
 Until a voice behind him cried,
 "Beitram! well met on Greta side"

- 11 Instant his sword was in his hand,
 As instant sunk the ready brand,
 Yet, dubious still, opposed he stood
 To him that issued from the wood —
 "Guy Denzil!—is it thou?" he said,
 "Do we two meet in Scrigill shade?
 Stand back a space!—thy purpose show,
 Whether thou comest as friend or foe
 Report hath said, that Denzil's name
 From Rokeby's band was rized with shame"—
 "A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
 Who told his knight, in peevish zeal,
 Of my marauding on the downs
 Of Calverley and Bradford downs —
 I reck not In a war to strive,
 Where, save the leaders, none can thrive,
 Suits ill my mood, and better game
 Awaits us both, if thou'rt the same
 Unscrupulous bold Risingham
 Who watched with me in midnight dark,
 To snatch a deer from Rokeby-park
 How think'st thou?"—"Speak thy purpose out
 I love not mystery or doubt"—
- 12 "Then, list —Not far there lurk a crew
 Of trusty comrades stanch and true,
 Gleaned from both factions—Roundheads, freed
 From cant of sermon and of creed,
 And Cavaliers, whose souls, like mine,
 Spurn at the bonds of discipline
 Wiser, we judge, by dale and wold,
 A warfare of our own to hold

Than breathe our list on battle-down,
 For cloak or surplice mice or crown
 Our schemes are laid, our purpose set,
 A chief and leader lack we yet —
 Thou art a wanderer, it is said,
 For Moitham's death, thy steps waylaid,
 Thy herd at price—so say our spies,
 Who range the valley in disguise,
 Join then with us, though wild debate
 And wrangling rend our infant state,
 Lach, to an equal lorth to bow,
 Will yield to chief renowned as thou ”—

- 13 “Even now,” thought Bertram, “passion-stirred,
 I called on hell, and hell has heard !
 What lack I, vengeance to command,
 But of stanch comrades such a band ?
 This Denzil, vowed to every evil,
 Might read a lesson to the devil
 Well, be it so ! each knave and fool
 Shall serve as my revenge's tool ”—
 Aloud, “I take thy proffer, Guy,
 But tell me where thy comrades lie ? ”—
 “Not far from hence,” Guy Denzil said,
 “Descend, and cross the river's bed,
 Where rises yonder cliff so gray ”—
 “Do thou,” said Bertram, “lead the way ”
 Then muttered, “It is best make sure,
 Guy Denzil's faith was never pure ”—
 He followed down the steep descent,
 Then through the Greta's streams they went.
 And, when they reached the farther shore,
 They stood the lonely cliff before

- 14 With wonder Bertram heard within
 The flinty rock a muffled din,
 But when Guy pulled the wilding spray,
 And brambles, from its base away,
 He saw, appearing to the air,
 A little entrance, low and square,
 Like opening cell of hermit lone,
 Dark, winding through the living stone.
 Here entered Denzil, Bertram here,
 And loud and louder on their ear,
 As from the bowels of the earth,
 Resounded shouts of boisterous mirth
 Of old, the cavern strut and rude
 In slaty rock, the peasant hewed,
 And Brignal's woods, and Scargill's, above,
 E'en now, o'er many a sister cave,
 Where, far within the darksome rift,
 The wedge and lever ply their thrift,
 But war had silenced rural trade,

And the deserted mine was made
 'The banquet-hall and fortress too
 Of Denzil and his desperate crew —
 There Guilt his anxious revel kept,
 There, on his sordid pallet, slept
 Guilt-born Excess, the goblet drained
 Still in his slumbering grasp retained,
 Regret was there, his eye still cast
 With vain repining on the past,
 Among the feasters wiled near
 Sorrow, and unrepentant Fear,
 And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven
 With his own crimes reproaching heaven,
 While Bertram showed, amid the crew,
 The Master-Fiend that Milton drew

- 15 Hark! the loud revel wakes again,
 To greet the leader of the train
 Behold the group by the pale lamp,
 That struggles with the earthy damp
 By what strange features Vice has known
 To single out and mark her own!
 Yet some there are, whose brows retain
 Less deeply stamped her brand and stain
 See yon pale stripling! when a boy,
 A mother's pride, a father's joy!
 Now, 'gainst the vault's rude walls reclined,
 An early image fills his mind
 The cottage, once his sire's, he sees,
 Embowered upon the banks of Tees,
 He views sweet Winston's woodland scene,
 And shares the dance on Gainsford-green
 A tear is springing—but the zest
 Of some wild tale, or brutal jest,
 Hath to loud laughter stirred the rest
 On him they call, the aptest mate
 For jovial song and merry feat,
 Fast flies his dream—with druntless run,
 As one victorious o'er despair,
 He bids the ruddy cup go round,
 Till sense and sorrow both are drowned,
 And soon, in merry wassail, he,
 The life of all their revelry,
 Perls his loud song!—The muse has found
 Her blossoms on the wildest ground,
 Mid noxious weeds at random strewed,
 Themselves all profitless and rude —
 With desperate merriment he sung,
 The cavern to the chorus rung,
 Yet mingled with his reckless glee
 Remorse's bitter agony

SONG

- 16 O, Brignal banks are wild and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there,
 Would grace a summer queen,
 And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
 Beneath the turrets high,
 A Maiden on the castle wall
 Was singing merrily,—

Chorus

"O, Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there
 Than reign our English queen"—

' If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
 To leave both tower and town,
 Thou first must guess what life lead we
 That dwell by dale and down
 And if thou canst that riddle read,
 As read full well you may,
 Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
 As blithe as Queen of May"—

Chorus

Yet sung she, "Brignal banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there
 Than reign our English queen

- 17 "I read you, by your bugle-horn,
 And by your palfrey good,
 I read you for a ranger sworn
 To keep the king's greenwood"—
 "A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
 And 'tis at peep of light,
 His blast is heard at merry morn,
 And mine at dead of night"—

Chorus

Yet sung she, ' Brignal banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are gay,
 I would I were with Edmund there,
 To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musketoon,
 So gallantly you come,
 I read you for a bold dragoon,
 That lists the tuck of drum"—
 "I list no more the tuck of drum,
 No more the trumpet hear,
 But when the beetle sounds his hum
 My comrades take the spear,

Chorus

And, O ! though Brignal banks be fair
 And Greta woods be gay,
 Yet mickle must the maiden dre,
 Would reign my Queen of May !

- 18 "Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
 A nameless death I'll die,
 The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
 Were better mate than I !
 And when I'm with my comrades met
 Beneath the greenwood bough,
 What once we were we all forget,
 Nor think what we are now

Chorus

"Yet Brignal banks are fresh and fair
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there
 Would grace a summer queen"—

When Edmund ceased his simple song,
 Was silence on the sullen throng,
 Till waked some ruder mate their glee
 With note of courser minstrelsy
 But, far apart, in dark divan,
 Denzil and Bertram many a plan,
 Of import foul and fiece, designed,
 While still on Bertram's grasping mind
 The wealth of murdered Moitham hung—
 Though half he feared his daring tongue,
 When it should give his wishes birth,
 Might raise a spectre from the earth !

- 19 At length his wondrous tale he told
 When, scornful, smiled his comrade bold
 For, trained in licence of a court,
 Religion's self was Denzil's sport
 Then judge in what contempt he held
 The visionary tales of old !
 His awe for Bertram's voice repressed
 The unbeliever's sneering jest
 "I were hard," he said, "for sage or seer
 To spell the subject of your fear,
 Nor do I boast the art renowned,
 Vision and omen to expound
 Yet, fath if I must needs afford
 To spectre watching treasured hoard,
 As bin-dog keeps his master's roof,
 Bidding the plunderer stand aloof,
 I his doubt remains—thy goblin gaunt
 Hath chosen ill his ghostly haunt,
 For why his guard on Moitham hold,
 When Rokeby castle hath the gold "

Thy patron won on Indian soil,
By stealth, by piracy, and spoil?"—

- 30 At this he paused—for angry shame
Lowered on the brow of Risingham
He blushed to think, that he should seem
Assertor of an airy dream,
And gave his wrath another theme
'Denzil," he says, "though lowly laid,
Wrong not the memory of the dead,
For, while he lived, at Mortham's loof-
Thy very soul, Guy Denzil, shook !
And when he taxed thy breach of word
To yon fair Rose of Allenford,
I saw thee crouch like chastened hound,
Whose back the huntsman's lash hath found.
Nor dare to call his foreign wealth
The spoil of piracy or stealth,
He won it bravely with his brand,
When Spain waged warfare with our land.
Mark, too,—I brook no idle jeer,
Nor couple Bertram's name with fear,
Mine is but half the demon's lot,
For I believe, but tremble not,—
Enough of this —Say, why this hoard
Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle stored,
Or think'st that Mortham would bestow
His treasure with his faction's foe?"—

- 21 Soon quenched was Denzil's ill-timed mirth
Rather he would have seen the earth
Give to ten thousand spectres birth,
Than venture to awake to flame
The deadly wrath of Risingham
Submiss he answered,—“Mortham's mind
Thou know'st, to joy was ill inclined
In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
A lusty reveller was he,
But since returned from over sea,
A sullen and a silent mood
Hath numbed the current of his blood
Hence he refused each kindly call
To Rokeby's hospitable hall,
And our stout Knight, at dawn of morn
Who loved to hear the bugle-horn,
Nor less, when eve his oaks embrowned,
To see the ruddy cup go round,
Look umbrage that a friend so near
Refused to share his chase and cheer,
Thus did the kindred barons jar,
Ere they divided in the war
Yet, trust me, friend, Matilda fair
Of Mortham's wealth is destined heir,"—

A maid he found in Gret's bower,
Whose speech, like David's harp, had sway
To charm his evil fiend away
I know not if her features moved
Remembrance of the wife he loved,
But he would gaze upon her eye,
Till his mood softened to a sigh
He, whom no living mortal sought
To question of his secret thought,
Now every thought and care confessed
To his fair niece's faithful breast,
Nor was there aught of rich and rare,
In earth, in ocean, or in air,
But it must deck Matilda's hair
Her love still bound him unto life,
But then awoke the civil strife,
And menials bore, by his commands,
Three coffers, with their iron bands,
From Mortham's vault, at midnight deep
To her lone bower in Rokeby-Keep,
Ponderous with gold and plate of pride—
His gift, if he in battle died ”—

- 25 “Then Denzil, as I guess, lays train,
These iron-banded chests to gain,
Else, wherefore should he hover here,
Where many a peril waits him near,
For all his feats of war and peace,
For plundered boors, and hearts of green?
Since through the hamlets as he fired,
What hearth has Guy's marauding spired,
Or where the chase that hath not rung
With Denzil's bow, at midnight strung?”—
“I hold my wont—my rangers go
E'en now to track a milk-white doe
By Rokeby-hall she takes her hur,
In Gret's wood she harbours fair,
And when my huntsman marks her way,
What think'st thou Bertram, of the prey?
Were Rokeby's daughter in our power,
We rate her ransom at her dower ”—

- 26 “'Tis well!—there's vengeance in the thought
Matilda is by Wilfrid sought
And hot-brained Redmond, too, 'tis said,
Pays lover's homage to the mad
Bertram she scorned—if met by chance,
She turned from me her shuddering glance
Like a nice dame, that will not brook
On what she hates and loathes to look;
She told to Mortham she could ne'er
Behold me without secret fear,
Foreboding evil—she may rue

The rose is budding fair,
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
Ere we two meet again"
He turned his charger as he spake,
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
Said, "Adieu for evermore,
My love!

And adieu for evermore"—

- 29 ' What youth is this, your bard among,
The best for minstrelsy and song?
In his wild notes seem aptly met
A strain of pleasure and regret"—
"Edmund of Winston is his name,
The harplet sounded with the same
Of early hopes his childhood gave,—
Now centred all in Bugnal cave!
I watch him well—his wayward course
Shows oft a tincture of remorse
Some early love-shaft grazed his heart
And oft the scum will ache and smart
Yet is he useful,—of the rest,
By fits, the darling and the jest,
His harp, his story, and his lay
Oft aid the idle hours away
When unemployed, each fiery mate
Is ripe for mutinous debate
He tuned his strings e'en now—again
He wakes them, with a blither strain

SONG—ALLEN A DALE

- 30 Allen-a-Dale has no faggot for burning,
Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,
Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,
Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning
Come, rend me my riddle! come, hearken my tale!
And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in pride
And he views his domains upon Arkendale side
The mere for his net, and the land for his game,
The chase for the wild, and the park for the tame,
Yet the fish of the lake, and the deer of the vale,
Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
Though his spur be as sharp, and his blade be as bright
Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his word,
And the best of our nobles his bonnet will veil,
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore meets Allen-a-Dale

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come,
The mother, she asked of his household and home.

"Though the castle of Richmond stand far on the hill,
My hall," quoth bold Allen, "shows gullanter still,
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale,
And with all its bright sparkles!" said Allen-a-Dale

The father was steel, and the mother was stone,
They lifted the latch, and they bade him be gone,
But loud, on the morrow, their wail and their cry
He had laughed on the last with his bonny black eye,
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was Allen-a-Dale

- 31 "Thou seest that, whether sad or gay,
Love mingles ever in his lay
But when his boyish wayward fit
Is o'er, he hath address and wit;
O' 'tis a brain of fire, can ape
Each dialect, each various shape"—
"Nay, then, to aid thy project, Guy—
Soft! who comes here?"—"My trusty spy,
Speak, Hamlin! hast thou lodged our deer?"
"I have—but two fair stags are near
I watched her as she slowly strayed
From Eglstone up Thorsgill glade,
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her side,
And then young Redmond, in his pride,
Shot down to meet them on their way
Much, as it seemed, was theirs to say
There's time to pitch both toil and net,
Before their path be homeward set"—
A hurried and a whispered speech
Did Bertram's will to Denzil teach,
Who, turning to the robber band,
Bade four, the bravest, take the brand

CANTO FOURTH

- 1 WHEN Denmark's Raven soared on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke
And the broad shadow of her wing
Blackened each cataract and spring,
Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Foice
Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fixed on each vale a Runic name,
Reared high their altars' rugged stone,
And gave their Gods the land they won.
Then, Balder, one bleak garth was thine,
And one sweet brooklet's silver line,
And Woden's Croft did title gain
From the stern Father of the Slain;

But to the Monarch of the Mice,
That held in fight the foremost place,
To Odm's son, and Sisia's spouse,
New Stratforth high they put their vows,
Remembered Thor's victorious fame,
And gave the dell the Thunderer's name

- 2 Yet Scald or Kemper erred, I ween,
Who gave that soft and quiet scene,
With all its varied light and shade,
And every little sunny glade,
And the blithe brook that strolls along
Its pebbled bed with summer song,
To the grim God of blood and scar,
The grisly King of Northern War.
O, better were its banks assigned
To spirits of a gentler kind !
For where the thicket-groups recede,
And the rath primrose decks the mead,
The velvet grass seems carpet meet
For the light faeries' lively feet
Yon tufted knoll, with daisies strown,
Might make proud Oberon a throne,
While, hidden in the thicket nigh,
Puck should brood o'er his frolic sly;
And where profuse the wood-veitch clings
Round ash and elm, in verdant rings,
Its pale and azure-pencilled flower
Should canopy Titania's bower.

- 3 Here rise no cliffs the vale to shade,
But, skirting every sunny glade,
In fair variety of green
The woodland lends its sylvan screen
Hairy, yet haughty, frowns the oak,
Its boughs by weight of ages broke,
And towers erect, in sable spire,
The pine-tree scathed by lightning-fire,
The drooping ash and birch, between,
Hang their fair tresses o'er the green,
And all beneath, at random grow
Each coppice dwarf of varied show,
Or, round the stems profusely twined,
Fling summer odours on the wind
Such varied group Urbino's hand
Round Him of Farsus nobly planned,
What time he bade proud Athens own
On Mars's Mount the God Unknown !
Then gray Philosophy stood nigh,
Though bent by age, in spirit high
There rose the scar-seamed Veteran's spear,
There Grecian Beauty bent to her,

While Childhood at her foot was placed,
Or clung delighted to her wait.

- 4 "And rest we here," Matilda said,
And sate her in the varying shade.
"Chance met, ye well may steal an hour
To friendship due from fortune's power
Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must lend
Thy counsel to thy sister-friend,
And Redmond, thou, at my behest,
No farther urge thy desperate quest.
For to my care a charge is left,
Dangerous to one of aid bereft,
Well nigh an orphan, and alone,
Captive her sire, her house o'erthrown." —
Wilfrid, with wonted kindness graced,
Beside her on the turf she placed,
Then paused, with downcast look and eye.
Nor bade young Redmond seat him nigh.
Her conscious diffidence he saw,
Drew backward as in modest awe,
And sat a little space removed,
Unmarked to gaze on her he loved

- 5 Wreathed in its dark-brown rings her hair
Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
Half hid and half revealed to view
Her full dark eye of hazel hue.
The rose, with faint and feeble streak,
So slightly tinged the maiden's cheek,
That you had said her hue was pale
But if she faced the summer gale,
Or spoke, or sung, or quicker moved,
Or heard the praise of those she loved,
Or when of interest was expressed
Aught that awoke feeling in her breast,
The mantling blood in ready play
Rivalled the blush of rising day
There was a soft and pensive grace,
A cast of thought upon her face,
That suited well the forehead high,
The eye-lash dark, and downcast eye,
The mild expression spoke a mind
In duty firm, composed, resigned, —
'Tis that which Roman art has given
To mark their maiden Queen of Heaven.
In hours of sport, that mood gave way
To Fancy's light and frolic play,
And when the dance, or tale, or song,
In harmless mirth sped time along,
Full of her doating sire would call
His Maud the merriest of them all.
But days of war and civil crime.

Allowed but ill such festal time,
And her soft pensiveness of brow
Had deepened into sadness now
In Marston field her father ta'en,
Her friends dispersed, brave Mortham slain,
While every ill her soul foretold
From Oswald's thirst of power and gold,
And boding thoughts that she must part
With a soft vision of her heart,—
All lowered around the lovely maid,
To darken her dejection's shade

6 Who has not heard—while Erin yet
Strove 'gunst the Saxon's iron bit—
Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood imbrued his steel,
Against St George's cross blazed high
The banners of his Tanistry,
To fiery Essex gave the foil,
And reigned a prince on Ulster's soil?
But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought and died,
And Aron-Duff to ocean bore
His billows red with Saxon gore
'Twas first in that disastrous fight
Rokeby and Mortham proved their might.
There had they fallen amongst the rest,
But pity touched a chieftain's breast,
The Tanist he to great O'Neale
He checked his followers' bloody zeal,
To quarter took the kinsmen bold,
And bore them to his mountain hold,
Gave them each sylvan joy to know,
Sheve-Donald's cliffs and woods could show.
Shared with them Erin's festal cheer,
Showed them the chase of wolf and deer,
And, when a fitting time was come,
Safe and unransomed sent them home,
Larded with many a gift, to prove
A generous foe's respect and love

7 Years speed away On Rokeby's herd
Some touch of early snow was shed,
Calm he enjoyed, by Greta's wave,
The peace which James the Peaceful gave,
While Mortham, far beyond the main,
Waged his fierce wars on Indian Spain —
It chanced upon a wintry night,
That whitened Stanmore's stormy height,
The chase was o'er, the stag was killed,
In Rokeby hall the cups were filled,
And by the huge stone chimney sat
The Knight in hospitable state

Moonless the sky, the hour was late,
 When a loud summons shook the gate
 And sore for entrance and for aid
 A voice of foreign accent prayed
 The porter answered to the call,
 And instant rushed into the hall
 A Man, whose aspect and attire
 Startled the circle by the fire

- 8 His plaited hair in elf-locks spread
 Around his bare and matted head,
 On leg and thigh, close stretched and trim,
 His vesture showed the sinewy limb,
 In saffron dyed, a linen vest
 Was frequent folded round his breast,
 A mantle long and loose he wore,
 Shaggy with ice, and stained with gore
 He clasped a burden to his heart,
 And, resting on a knotted dart,
 The snow from brow and beard he shook,
 And round him gazed with wildered look.
 Then up the hall, with staggering pace,
 He hastened by the blaze to place,
 Half lifeless from the bitter air,
 His load, a Boy of beauty rare
 To Rokeby, next, he louted low,
 Then stood erect his tale to show,
 With wild majestic port and tone,
 Like envoy of some barbarous throne
 "Sir Richard, Lord of Rokeby, hear!
 Turlough O'Neale salutes thee dear,
 He graces thee, and to thy care
 Young Redmond gives, his grandson fair
 He bids thee breed him as thy son,
 For Turlough's days of joy are done,
 And other lords have seized his land,
 And faint and feeble is his hand,
 And all the glory of Tyrone
 Is like a morning vapour flown
 To bind the duty on thy soul,
 He bids thee think on Erin's bowl!
 If any wrong the young O'Neale,
 He bids thee think of Erin's steel
 To Northam first this charge was due,
 But, in his absence, honours you —
 Now is my master's message by,
 And Ferraught will contented die" —
- 9 His look grew fixed, his cheek grew pale,
 He sunk when he had told his tale,
 For, hid beneath his mantle wide,
 A mortal wound was in his side
 Vain was all aid—in terror wild,

And sorrow, screamed the orphan child
 Poor Ferraight raised his wistful eyes
 And faintly strove to soothe his cries,
 All reckless of his dying pain,
 He blessed and blessed him o'er again,
 And kissed the little hands outspread
 And kissed and crossed the infant head,
 And in his native tongue and phrase,
 Prayed to each saint to watch his days!
 Then all his strength together drew,
 The charge to Rokeby to renew
 When half was filtered from his breast,
 And half by dying signs expressed,
 "Bless thee, O'Neale!" he faintly said,
 And thus the faithful spirit fled

10 'Twas long ere soothing might prevail
 Upon the child to end the tale,
 And then he said, that from his home
 His grandsire had been forced to roam,
 Which had not been if Redmond's hand,
 Had but had strength to draw the brand,
 The brand of Lenagh More the Red,
 That hung beside the gray wolf's head —
 'Twas from his broken phrase descried,
 His foster-father was his guide,
 Who, in his charge, from Ulster bore
 Letters, and gifts a goodly store,
 But ruffians met them in the wood
 Ferraight in battle boldly stood,
 Till wounded and o'erpowered at length,
 And stripped of all, his failing strength
 Just bore him here—and then the child
 Renewed again his morning wild

11 The tear, down Childhood's cheek that flows,
 Is like the dew-drop on the rose,
 When next the summer breeze comes by,
 And waves the bush, the flower is dry
 Won by their care, the orphan child
 Soon on his new protector smiled,
 With dimpled cheek and eye so fair,
 Through his thick curls of flaxen hair
 But blithest laughed that cheek and eye,
 When Rokeby's little maid was nigh,
 'Twas his, with elder brother's pride,
 Matilda's tottering steps to guide,
 His native lays in Irish tongue
 To soothe her infant ear he sung,
 And primrose twined with daisy fair,
 To form a chaplet for her hair
 By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's strand,
 The children still were hand in hand

And good Sir Richard smiling eyed
The early knot so kindly tied

- 12 But summer months bring wilding shoot
From bud to bloom, from bloom to fruit,
And years draw on our human spin,
From child to boy, from boy to man,
And soon in Rokeby's woods is seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green
He loves to wake the felon boar,
In his dark hunt on Gretr's shore,
And loves, against the deer so dun,
To draw the shaft, or lift the gun
Yet more he loves, in autumn prime,
The hazel's spreading boughs to climb,
And down its clustered stores to hail,
Where young Matilda holds her veil
And she, whose veil receives the shower,
Is altered too, and knows her power;
Assumes a mistress's pride,
Her Redmond's dangerous sports to chide,
Yet listens still to hear him tell
How the grim wild-born fought and fell,
How at his fall the bugle rung,
Till rock and greenwood answer flung,
Then blesses her, that man can find
A pastime of such savage kind!
- 13 But Redmond knew to weave his tale
So well with praise of wood and dale,
And knew so well each point to trace
Gives living interest to the chase,
And knew so well o'er all to throw
His spirit's wild romantic glow,
That, while she blamed, and while she feared,
She loved each venturous tale she heard
Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain
To bower and hall their steps restrain,
Together they explored the page
Of glowing bud or gifted sage,
Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
The minstrel art alternate tried,
While gladsome harp and lively lay
Bade winter night flit fast away
Thus from their childhood blending still
Their sport, their study, and their skill,
An union of the soul they prove,
But must not think that it was love
But though they dared not, envious Fame
Soon dared to give that union name,
And when so often, side by side,
From year to year the pair she eyed,
She sometimes blamed the good old Knight,

As dull of ear and dim of sight,
Sometimes his purpose would declare
That young O Neale should wed his heir

- 14 The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
And bandage from the lovers' eyes,
'T was plain that Oswald for his son,
Had Rokeby's favour well-nigh won
Now must they meet with change of cheer
With mutual looks of shame and fear,
Now must Matilda stray apart,
To school her disobedient heart,
And Redmond now alone must rue
The love he never can subdue
But factions rose, and Rokeby swore,
No rebel's son should wed his heir,
And Redmond, nurtured while a child
In many a bird's traditions wild,
Now sought the lonely wood or stream
To cherish there a happier dream,
Of maiden won by sword or lance,
As in the regions of romance,
And count the heroes of his line,
Great Nial of the Pledges Nine,
Shane-Dymas wild, and Geraldine,
And Connan-More, who vowed his race
For ever to the fight and chase,
And cursed him, of his lineage born,
Should sheathe the sword to reap the corn,
Or leave the mountain and the wold,
To shroud himself in castled hold
From such examples hope he drew,
And brightened as the trumpet blew

- 15 If brides were won by heart and blade,
Redmond had both his cause to aid,
And all beside of nurture rare
That might besecm a baron's heir
Turlough O Neale, in Erin's strife,
On Rokeby's Lord bestowed his life,
And well did Rokeby's generous knight
Young Redmond for the deed requite
Nor was his liberal care and cost
Upon the gallant stripling lost
Seek the North Riding broad and wide,
Like Redmond none could steed bestride,
From Tynemouth search to Cumberland,
Like Redmond none could wield a brand,
And then, of humour kind and free,
And bearing him to each degree
With frank and fearless courtesy,
There never youth was formed to sterl
Upon the heart like brave O'Neale

- 16 Sir Richard loved him as his son,
 And when the days of peace were done,
 And to the gales of war he gave
 The banner of his sires to wave,
 Redmond, distinguished by his care,
 He chose that honoured flag to bear,
 And named his page, the next degree
 In that old time to chivalry
 In five pitched fields he well maintained
 The honoured place his worth obtained,
 And high was Redmond's youthful name
 Blazed in the roll of martial fame
 Had fortune smiled on Marston fight,
 The eve had seen him dubbed a knight,
 'Twice 'mid the battle's doubtful strife,
 Of Rokeby's Lord he saved the life,
 But when he saw him prisoner made,
 He kissed and then resigned his blade,
 And yielded him an easy prey
 To those who led the Knight away,
 Resolved Matilda's sire should prove,
 In prison, as in fight, his love
- 17 When lovers meet in adverse hour,
 'Tis like a sun-glance through a shower,
 A watery ray, an instant seen
 The darkly closing clouds between
 As Redmond on the turf reclined,
 The past and present filled his mind
 "It was not thus," Affection said,
 "I dreamed of my return, dear maid!"
 Not thus, when from thy trembling hand,
 I took the banner and the brand,
 When round me, as the bugles blew,
 Their blades three hundred warriors drew,
 And, while the standard I unrolled,
 Clashed their bright arms with clamour bold,
 Where is that banner now?—its pride
 Lies 'whelmed in Ouse's sullen tide!
 Where now these warriors?—in their gore,
 They cumber Marston's dismal moor!
 And what avails a useless brand,
 Held by a captive shackled hand,
 That only would his life return
 To aid thy sire to bear his charm!"—
 Thus Redmond to himself apart,
 Nor lighter was his rival's heart,
 For Wilfrid, while his generous soul
 Disdained to profit by control,
 By many a sign could mark too plain,
 Save with such aid, his hopes were vain
 But now Matilda's accents stole

On the dark visions of their soul,
And bade their mournful musing fly,
Like mist before the zephyr's sigh

- 18 "I need not to my friends recall
How Mortham shunned my father's hall,
A man of silence and of woe,
Yet ever anxious to bestow
On my poor self whate'er could prove
A kinsman's confidence and love
My feeble aid could sometimes chase
The clouds of sorrow for a space
But oftener, fixed beyond my power,
I marled his deep despondence lower
One dismal cause, by all unguessed,
His fearful confidence confessed,
And twice it was my hap to see
Examples of that agony
Which for a season can o'erstrum
And wreck the structure of the brain
He had the awful power to know
The approaching mental overthrow,
And while his mind had courage yet
To struggle with the dreadful fit,
The victim writhed against its throes,
Like wretch beneath a murderer's blows
This malady, I well could mark,
Sprung from some direful cause and dark,
But still he kept its source concealed,
Till arming for the civil field,
Then in my charge he bade me hold
A treasure huge of gems and gold,
With this disjointed dismal scroll,
That tells the secret of his soul
In such wild words as oft betray
A mind by anguish forced astray "

MORTHAM'S HISTORY

- 19 "Matilda! thou hast seen me start,
As if a dagger thrilled my heart,
When it has happed some casual phrase
Waked memory of my former days
Believe that few can backward cast
Their thoughts with pleasure on the past,
But I!—my youth was rash and vain,
And blood and rage my manhood stum,
And my gray hairs must now descend
To my cold grave without a friend!
Even thou, Matilda, wilt disown
Thy kinsman, when his guilt is known
And must I lift the bloody veil,
That hides my dark and fatal tale!
I must—I will—Pale phantom, cease!

Leave me one little hour in peace !
 Thus hunted, think'st thou I have skill
 Thine own commission to fulfil ?
 Or, while thou point'st with gesture fierce
 Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody hearse,
 How can I punt thee as thou wert,
 So fair in face, so warm in heart !—

- 20 "Yes, she was fair !—Matilda, thou
 Hast a soft sadness on thy brow,
 But hers was like the sunny glow
 That lugs on earth and all below !
 We wedded secret—there was need—
 Differing in country and in creed,
 And when to Mortham's tower she came,
 We mentioned not her race and name,
 Until thy sue, who fought afar,
 Should turn him home from foreign war,
 On whose kind influence we relied
 To soothe her father's ire and pride
 Few months we lived retired, unknown
 To all but one dear friend alone,
 One darling friend—I spare his shame,
 I will not write the villain's name !
 My trespasses I might forget,
 And sue in vengeance for the debt
 Due by a brother worm to me,
 Ungrateful to God's clemency,
 That spared me penitential time,
 Nor cut me off amid my crime —
- 21 "A kindly smile to all she lent,
 But on her husband's friend 'twas bent
 So kind that from its harmless glee
 The wretch misconstrued villany
 Repulsed in his presumptuous love,
 A vengeful snare the traitor wove
 Alone we sat—the flask had flowed,
 My blood with heat unwonted glowed,
 When through the alleys walk we spied
 With hurried step my Edith glide,
 Cowering beneath the verdant screen,
 As one unwilling to be seen
 Words cannot paint the fiendish smile
 That curled the traitor's cheek the while !
 Fiercely I questioned of the cause,
 He made a cold and artful pause,
 Then pryed it might not chafe my mood
 'There was a gallant in the wood !'—
 We had been shooting at the deer,—
 My cross-bow (evil chance !) was near
 That ready weapon of my wrath
 I caught, and, hasting up the path,

In the yew grove my wife I found,
A stranger's arms her neck had bound !
I marked his heart—the bow I drew—
I loosed the shaft—'twas more than true !
I found my Edith's dying charms
Locked in her murdered brother's arms !
He came in secret to inquire
Her state, and reconcile her sire —

- 22 "All fled my rage—the villain first,
Whose craft my jealousy had nursed,
He sought in far and foreign clime
To 'scape the vengeance of his crime
The manner of the slaughter done
Was known to few, my guilt to none,
Some tale my faithful steward framed—
I know not what—of shaft mis aimed,
And even from those the act who knew,
He hid the hand from which it flew
Untouched by human laws I stood,
But God had heard the cry of blood !—
There is a blank upon my mind,
A fearful vision ill-defined,
Of raving till my flesh was torn,
Of dungeon-bolts and fetters worn—
And when I waked to woe more mild,
And questioned of my infant child—
(Have I not written, that she bore
A boy, like summer morning fair?)
With looks confused my menials tell
That armed men in Mortham dell
Beset the nurse's evening way,
And bore her, with her charge, away
My faithless friend, and none but he,
Could profit by this villany,
Him, then, I sought, with purpose died
Of treble vengeance on his head !
He 'scaped me—but my bosom's wound
Some faint relief from wandering found,
And over distant land and sea
I bore my load of misery

23. "Twas then that fate my footsteps led
Among a daring crew and died,
With whom full oft my hated life
I ventured in such desperate strife
That even my fierce associates saw
My frantic deeds with doubt and awe
Much then I learned, and much can show,
Of human guilt and human woe,
Yet ne'er have, in my wanderings, known,
A wretch whose sorrows matched my own !—
It chanced that after battle fray

Upon the bloody field we lay,
 The yellow moon her lustre shed
 Upon the wounded and the dead,
 While, sense in toil and wassail drowned,
 My Russian comrades slept around.
 There came a voice—its silver tone
 Was soft, Matilda, as thine own—
 ‘Ah, wretch!’ it said, ‘what makest thou here,
 While unavenged my bloody bier,
 While unprotected lies mine heir,
 Without a father’s name and care?’—

- 24 “I heard—obeyed—and homeward drew;
 The fiercest of our desperate crew
 I brought at time of need to aid
 My purposed vengeance, long delayed
 But humble be my thanks to Heaven
 That better hopes and thoughts has given,
 And by our Lord’s dear prayer has taught,
 Mercy by mercy must be bought’—
 Let me in misery rejoice—
 I’ve seen his face—I’ve heard his voice—
 I claimed of him my only child—
 As he disowned the theft, he smiled!
 That very calm and callous look,
 That fiendish sneer his visage took,
 As when he said, in scornful mood,
 ‘There is a gallant in the wood!’—
 —I did not slay him as he stood—
 All praise be to my Maker given!
 Long sufferance is one path to heaven’—

- 25 Thus far the woeful tale was heard,
 When something in the thicket stirred
 Up Redmond sprung, the villain Guy,
 (For he it was that lurked so nigh,)
 Drew back—he durst not cross his steel
 A moment’s space with brave O’Neale,
 For all the treasured gold that rests
 In Mortham’s iron-banded chests
 Redmond resumed his seat,—he said,
 Some roe was rustling in the shade
 Bertram laughed grimly, when he saw
 His timorous comrade backward draw
 “A trusty mate art thou, to fear
 A single arm, and aid so near!
 Yet have I seen thee mark a deer
 Give me thy carbine—I’ll show
 An art that thou wilt gladly know,
 How thou mayst safely quell a foe”—

- 26 On hands and knees fierce Bertram drew
 The spreading birch and hazels through,
 Till he had Redmond full in view;

The gun he levelled—mark like this
 Was Bertram never known to miss,
 When far opposed to aim there sat
 An object of his mortal hate
 That day young Redmond's death had seen,
 But twice Matilda came between
 The carbine and Redmond's breast,
 Just ere the spring his finger pressed
 A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
 But yet his fell design forbore
 "It ne'er," he muttered, "shall be said
 That thus I scathed thee, haughty maid!
 Then moved to seek more open aim,
 When to his side Guy Denzil came
 "Bertram, forbear!—we are undone
 For ever, if thou fire the gun
 By all the fiends, an armed force
 Descends the dell, of foot and horse!
 We perish if they hear a shot—
 Madman! we have a safer plot—
 Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear thee back!
 Behold, down yonder hollow track,
 The warlike leader of the band
 Comes, with his broadsword in his hand"—
 Bertram looked up, he saw, he knew
 That Denzil's fears had counselled true,
 Then cursed his fortune and withdrew,
 Threaded the woodlands undescried,
 And gazed the cave on Giet's side

- 27 They whom dark Bertram, in his wrath,
 Doomed to captivity or death,
 Their thoughts to one sad subject lent,
 Saw not nor heard the ambushment
 Heedless and unconcerned they sat,
 While on the very verge of fate,
 Heedless and unconcerned remained,
 When Heaven the murderer's arm restrained,—
 As ships drift darkling down the tide,
 Nor see the shelves o'er which they glide
 Uninterrupted thus they heard
 What Northam's closing tale declared
 He spoke of wealth as of a lord,
 By Fortune on a wretch bestowed,
 In bitter mockery of hate,
 His cureless woes to aggravate,
 But yet he pryed Matilda's care
 Might save that treasure for his heir—
 His Edith's son—for still he raved
 As confident his life was saved,
 In frequent vision, he averred,
 He saw his face, his voice he heard

Then argued calm—had murder been,
 The blood, the corpses, had been seen,
 Some had pretended, too, to mark
 On Windermere a stranger bark,
 Whose crew, with jealous care, yet mild,
 Guarded a female and a child
 While these faint proofs he told and pressed,
 Hope seemed to kindle in his breast,
 Though inconsistent, vague, and vain,
 It warped his judgment, and his brain

28 These solemn words his story close —
 "Heaven witness for me, that I chose
 My part in this sad civil fight,
 Moved by no cause but England's right
 My country's groans have bid me draw
 My sword for gospel and for law,—
 These righted, I fling arms aside,
 And seek my son through Europe wide
 My wealth, on which a kinsman nigh
 Already casts a grasping eye,
 With thee my unsuspected lie
 When of my death Matilda hears,
 Let her retain her trust three years,
 If none, from me, the treasure claim,
 Perished is Mortham's race and name;
 Then let it leave her generous hand,
 And flow in bounty o'er the land,
 Soften the wounded prisoner's lot,
 Rebuild the peasant's ruined cot,
 So spoils, acquired by fight afar,
 Shall mitigate domestic war"—

29 The generous youths, who well had known
 Of Mortham's mind the powerful tone,
 To that high mind, by sorrow swerved
 Gave sympathy his woes deserved,
 But Wilfrid chief, who saw revealed
 Why Mortham wished his life concealed,
 In secret, doubtless, to pursue
 The schemes his wildered fancy drew
 Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell
 That she would share her father's cell,
 His partner of captivity,
 Where'er his prison-house should be,
 Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-hall,
 Dismantled, and forsook by all,
 Open to rapine and to stealth,
 Had now no safeguard for the wealth
 Intrusted by her kinsman kind,
 And for such noble use designed
 "Was Barnard Castle then her choice,"
 Wilfrid inquired with hasty voice,

"Since there the victor's laws ordain,
Her father must a space remain?"—
A fluttered hope his accents shook.
A fluttered joy was in his look
Matilda hastened to reply,
For anger flashed in Redmond's eye,—
"Duty," she said, with gentle grace,
"Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of place.
Else had I for my sire assigned
Prison less galling to his mind
Than that his wild-wood haunts which sees,
And hears the murmur of the Tees,
Recalling thus, with every glance,
What captive's sorrow can enhance,
But where those woes are highest, there
Needs Rokeby most his daughter's care"—

- 30 He felt the kindly check she gave,
And stood abashed—then answered grave—
"I sought thy purpose, noble maid,
Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes to aid
I have beneath mine own command,
So wills my sire. A gallant band,
And well could send some horseman wight,
To bear the treasure forth by night,
And so bestow it as you deem
In these ill days my safest seem"—
"Thanks gentle Wilfrid, thanks," she said.
"O be it not one day delayed!
And, more thy sister-friend to aid,
Be thou thyself content to hold,
In thine own keeping, Mortham's gold
Safest with thee."—While thus she spoke,
Armed soldiers on their converse broke,
The sum of whose approach afraid,
The ruffians left their ambuscade
Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
Then looked around as for a foe
"What mean'st thou, friend," young Wycliffe said,
"Why thus in arms beset the glade?"—
"That would I gladly learn from you,
For up my squadron as I drew,
To exercise our martial game
Upon the moor of Barningham,
A stranger told you were waylaid,
Surrounded, and to death betrayed
He had a leader's voice, I ween,
A falcon glance, a warrior's mien
He bade me bring you instant aid,
I doubted not, and I obeyed"—

- 31 Wilfrid changed colour, and amazed,
Turned short, and on the speaker gazed;

While Redmond every thicket round
 Tracked earnest as a questing hound,
 And Denzil's carbine he found,
 Sure evidence, by which they knew
 The warning was as kind as true
 Wisest it seemed, with cautious speed
 To leave the dell. It was agreed,
 That Redmond, with Matilda fir,
 And sitting guard, should home repair,
 At nightfall Wilfrid should attend,
 With a strong band, his sister-friend,
 To bear with her from Rokeby's bowers
 To Barnard Castle's lofty towers,
 Secret and safe, the banded chests,
 In which the wealth of Mortham rests
 This hasty purpose fixed, they part,
 Each with a grieved and anxious heart.

CANTO FIFTH

THE sultry summer day is done,
 The western hills have hid the sun,
 But mountain peak and village spire
 Retain reflection of his fire
 Old Barnard's towers are purple still,
 To those that gaze from Toller-hill,
 Distant and high, the tower of Bowes
 Like steel upon the unil glows,
 And Stannmore's ridge, behind that lay,
 Rich with the spoils of parting day,
 In crimson and in gold arrayed,
 Streaks yet a while the closing shade,
 Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
 The tints which brighter hours had given
 Thus aged men, full loath and slow,
 The vanities of life forego,
 And count their youthful follies o'er,
 Till Memory lends her light no more

- 2 The eve, that slow on upland fades,
 His darker closed on Rokeby's glades,
 Where, sunk within their banks profound,
 Her guardian streams to meeting wound
 The stately oaks, whose sombre frown
 Of noontide made a twilight brown,
 Impervious now to fainter light,
 Of twilight make an early night
 Horse into middle air rose
 The vespers of the roosting crows,
 And with congenial murmurs seem
 To wake the Genn of the stream,
 For louder clamoured Greta's tide,
 And Toss in foam

And fitful waked the evening wind,
 Fitful in sighs its breath resigned
 Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured soul
 Felt in the scene a soft control,
 With lighter footstep pressed the ground,
 And often paused to look around,
 And, though his path was to his love,
 Could not but linger in the grove,
 To drink the thrilling interest dear,
 Of awful pleasure checked by fear
 Such inconsistent moods have we,
 Even when our passions strike the key

3 Now through the wood's dark mazes passed,
 The opening lawn he reached at last,
 Where, silv'ied by the moonlight ray,
 The ancient Hall before him lay
 Those martial terrors long were fled,
 That frowned of old around its herd
 The battlements, the turrets gray,
 Seemed half abandoned to decay,
 On rubican and keep of stone
 Stern Time the forman's work had done,
 Where banners the murderer blaved,
 The harebell now and wallflower waved,
 In the rude guard room, where of yore
 Their weary hours the warders wore,
 Now, while the cheerful faggots blaze,
 On the paved floor the spindle plays,
 The flanking guns dismounted lie,
 The moat is ruinous and dry,
 The grim portcullis gone—and all
 The fortress turned to peaceful hall

4 But yet precautions, lately ta'en,
 Showed danger's day revived again,
 The court-yard wall showed marks of care
 The fallen defences to repair,
 Lending such strength as might withstand
 The insult of marauding band
 The beams once more were taught to bear
 The trembling drawbridge into air,
 And not till questioned o'er and o'er,
 For Wilfrid oped the jealous door,
 And when he entered, bolt and bar
 Resumed their place with sullen jar,
 Then, as he crossed the vaulted porch,
 The old gray porter raised his torch,
 And viewed him o'er, from foot to head,
 Ere to the hall his steps he led
 That huge old hall, of knightly state,
 Dismantled seemed and desolate
 The moon through transom-shafts of stone,

Which crossed the latticed ovals, shone,
 And by the mournful light she gave,
 The Gothic vault seemed funeral cave
 Pennon and banner waved no more
 O'er beams of stag or tusks of boar,
 Nor glimmering arms were marshalled seen,
 To glance those slain spoils between
 Those arms, those ensigns, borne away,
 Accomplished Rokeby's brave array,
 But all were lost on Murston's day !
 Yet here and there the moonbeams fall
 Where armour yet adorns the wall,
 Cumbersome of size, uncouth to sight,
 And useless in the modern fight,
 Like veteran relic of the wars,
 Known only by neglected scars

- 5 Matilda soon to greet him came,
 And bade them light the evening flame ;
 Said, all for parting was prepared,
 And tarried but for Wilfrid's guard
 But then, reluctant to unfold
 His father's hoard of gold,
 He hinted that, lest jealous eye
 Should on their precious burden pry,
 He judged it best the castle gate
 To enter when the night wore late,
 And therefore he had left command
 With those he trusted of his land,
 That they should be at Rokeby met,
 What time the midnight-watch was set
 Now Redmond came, whose anxious care
 Till then was bused to prepare
 All needful, meetly to arrange
 The mansion for its mournful change
 With Wilfrid's care and kindness pleased,
 His cold unready hand he seized,
 And pressed it, till his kindly strain
 The gentle youth returned again
 Seemed as between them thus was said,
 "Awhile let jealousy be dead,
 And let our contest be, whose care
 Shall best assist this helpless fair"—
- 6 There was no speech the truce to bind,
 It was a compact of the mind,
 A generous thought, at once impress'd
 On either rival's generous breast
 Matilda well the secret took,
 From sudden change of mien and look,
 And—for not small had been her fear
 Of jealous ire and danger near—
 Felt, even in her dejected state,

A joy beyond the reach of fate
 They closed beside the chimney's blaze,
 And talked and hoped for happier days,
 And lent their sprits' rising glow
 Awhile to gild impending woe,—
 High privilege of youthful time,
 Worth all the pleasures of our prime!
 The bickering faggot sparkled bright,
 And gave the scene of love to sight,
 Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively glow,
 Played on Matilda's neck of snow,
 Her nut-brown curls and forehead high,
 And laughed in Redmond's azure eye
 Two lovers by the maiden side,
 Without a glance of jealous hate,
 The maid her lovers sat between,
 With open brow and equal mien —
 It is a sight but rarely spied,
 Thanks to man's wrath and woman's pride

- 7 While thus in peaceful guise they sat,
 A knock alarmed the outer gate,
 And ere the tudy porter stirred,
 The tinkling of a harp was heard
 A manly voice of mellow swell
 Bore burden to the music well

SONG

"Summer eve is gone and passed,
 Summer dew is falling fast,
 I have wandered all the day,
 Do not bid me farther stray!
 Gentle hearts of gentle kin,
 Take the wandering Harper in!"

But the stern porter answer gave,
 With "Get thee hence, thou strolling knave!
 The king wants soldiers, war, I know,
 Were meetest trade for such as thou"—
 At this unkind reproof agam,
 Answered the ready minstrel's strain

SONG (resumed)

"Bid not me, in battle field,
 Buckler lift, or broadsword wield!
 All my strength and all my art
 Is to touch the gentle heart,
 With the wizard notes that ring
 From the peaceful minstrel-string"—

The porter, all unmoved, replied,—
 "Depart in peace, with Heaven to guide,
 If longer by the gate thou dwell,
 Trust me, thou shalt not part so well"—

- 8 With somewhat of appealing look,
 The Harper's part young Wilfrid took,
 "These notes so wild and ready thrill,
 They show no vulgar minstrel's skill,
 Hard were his task to seek a home
 More distant, since the night is come,
 And for his faith I dare engage—
 Your Harpool's blood is soured by age,
 His gate, once readily displayed,
 To greet the friend, the poor to aid,
 Now even to me, though known of old,
 Did but reluctantly unfold"—
 —"O blame not, as poor Harpool's crime,
 An evil of this evil time
 He deems dependent on his cure
 The safety of his patron's heir,
 Nor judges meet to ope the tower
 To guest unknown at parting hour,
 Urging his duty to excess
 Of rough and stubborn faithfulness
 For this poor Harper I would fain
 He may relax —Hark to his strain!"

SONG (*resumed*)

- 9 "I have song of war for knight,
 Lay of love for lady bright,
 Fairy tale to lull the heir,
 Goblin grim the mounds to scure,
 Dark the night, and long till day
 Do not bid me farther stray!"
- "Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
 I can count them name by name,
 Legends of their line there be,
 Known to few, but known to me,
 If you honour Rokeby's kin,
 Take the wandering Harper in!"
- "Rokeby's lords had fair regard
 For the harp, and for the bard,
 Baron's rice throve never well,
 Where the curse of minstrel fell
 If you love that noble kin,
 Take the weary Harper in!"—

"Hark! Harpool parleys—there is hope,"
 Said Redmond, "that the gate will ope"—
 "For all thy brag and boast, I trow,
 Nought know'st thou of the Felon Sow,"
 Quoth Harpool, "nor how Greta-side
 She roamed, and Rokeby forest wide,
 Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the beast
 To Richmond's friars to make a feast
 Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale

Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale,
That well could strike with sword amain,
And of the valiant son of Sprun,
Finn Middleton, and blithe Sir Ralph,
There were a jest to make us laugh!
If thou canst tell it, in yon shed,
Thou'st won thy supper and thy bed"—

- 10 Matilda smiled, "Cold hope," said she,
"From Harpool's love of minstrelsy!
But, for this Harper, may we dare,
Redmond, to mend his couch and fire?"—
"O ask not me!—at minstrel-singing
My heart from infancy would spring,
Nor can I hear its simplest strain,
But it brings Erin's dream again,
When placed by Owen Lysagh's knee,
(The Filer of O'Neale was he,
A blind and bearded man, whose old
Was sacred as a prophet's held,)
I've seen a ring of rugged kerne,
With aspects shaggy, wild, and stern,
Enchanted by the master's lay,
Linger around the livelong day,
Shift from wild rage to wilder glee,
To love, to grief, to ecstasy,
And feel each varied change of soul
Obedient to the bard's control—
Ah, Clondeboy! thy friendly floor
Shieve-Donard's oak shall light no more,
Nor Owen's harp, beside the blaze,
Tell maiden's love, or hero's proudest
The mantling brambles hide thy hearth,
Centre of hospitable mirth,
All undistinguished in the glade,
My sires' glad home is prostrate laid,
Their vassals wander wide and far,
Serve foreign lords in distant war,
And now the stranger's sons enjoy
The lovely woods of Clondeboy!"—
He spoke, and proudly turned aside,
The starting tear to dry and hide

- 11 Matilda's dark and softened eye
Was glistening ere O'Neale's was dry
Her hand upon his arm she laid,—
'It is the will of heaven' she said
"And think'st thou, Redmond, I can part
From this loved home with lightsome heart,
Leaving to wild neglect white er
Even from my infancy was dear?
For in this calm domestic bound
Were all Matilda's pleasures found

That hearth, my sire was wont to grace,
 Full soon may be a stranger's place,
 This hall, in which a child I play'd,
 Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly laid,
 The bramble and the thorn may braid,
 Or, passed for aye from me and mine,
 It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line
 Yet is this consolation given,
 My Redmond,—'tis the will of heaven"—
 Her word, her action, and her phrase,
 Were kindly as in early days,
 For cold reserve had lost its power,
 In sorrow's sympathetic hour
 Young Redmond dared not trust his voice;
 But rather had it been his choice
 To share that melancholy hour
 Than, armed with all a chieftain's power,
 In full possession to enjoy
 Shieve-Donard wide, and Clandeboy

- 12 The blood left Wilfrid's ashen cheek,
 Matilda sees, and hastes to speak —
 "Happy in friendship's ready aid,
 Let all my murmurs here be stayed!
 And Rokeby's maiden will not part
 From Rokeby's hall with moody heart
 This night at least, for Rokeby's fame,
 The hospitable hearth shall flame,
 And, ere its native heir retire,
 Find for the wanderer rest and fire,
 While this poor Harper, by the blaze,
 Recounts the tale of other days
 Bid Harpool ope the door with speed,
 Admit him, and relieve each need —
 Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt thou try
 Thy minstrel skill?—nay, no reply—
 And look not sad!—I guess thy thought,
 Thy verse with laurels would be bought,
 And poor Matilda, landless now,
 Has not a garland for thy brow
 True, I must leave sweet Rokeby's glades,
 Nor wander more in Greta shades,
 But sure, no rigid ruler, thou
 Wilt a short prison-walk allow,
 Where summer flowers grow wild at will,
 On Marwood chase and Toller Hill,
 Then holly green and hily gray
 Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay"—
 The mournful youth, a space aside,
 To tune Matilda's harp applied,
 And then a low sad descant rung,
 As prelude to the lay he sung

THE CYPRESS WREATH

13 O Lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree !
Too lively glow the lilies light,
The varnished holly's all too bright,
The May-flower and the eglantine
May shade a brow less sad than mine,
 But, Lady, weave no wreath for me,
 Or weave it of the cypress-tree !

I et duple Mith his temples twine
 With tendrils of the laughing vine
 The manly oak, the pensive yew,
 To patriot and to sage be due,
 The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
 But that Matilda will not give,
 Then, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree !

Let merry England proudly rear
 Her blended roses, bought so dear,
 I et Albin bind her bonnet blue
 With heath and harebell dipped in dew,
 On favoured Erin's crest be seen
 The flowers she loves of emerald green—
 But, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree

Strike the wild harp, while maids prepare
 The ivy meet for minstrel's hair,
 And, while his crown of laurel-leaves
 With bloody hand the victor weaves,
 Let the loud trump his triumph tell,
 But when you hear the passing bell,
 Then, Lady, twine a wreath for me,
 And twine it of the cypress-tree

Yes ! twine for me the cypress bough,
 But, O Matilda, twine not now !
 Stay till a few brief months are passed,
 And I have looked and loved my last !
 When villagers my shroud bestrew
 With pansies, rosemary, and rue,—
 Then, Lady, weave a wreath for me,
 And weave it of the cypress-tree

14 O'Nerle observed the starting tear,
 And spoke with kind and blithesome cheer—
 "No, noble Wilfrid ! ere the day
 When mourns the land thy silent lay,
 Shall many a wreath be freely wove
 By hand of friendship and of love
 I would not wish that rigid Fate
 Had doomed thee to a captive's state,

Whose hands are bound by honour's law,
 Who wens a sword he must not draw ;
 But were it so, in minstrel pride
 The land together would we ride,
 On prancing steeds, like harpers old,
 Bound for the halls of barons bold,
 Each lover of the lye we'd seek,
 From Michael's Mount to Skiddaw's Peak,
 Survey wild Albin's mountain strand,
 And roam green Ern's lovely land,
 While thou the gentler souls should move,
 With lay of pity and of love,
 And I, thy mate, in rougher strain,
 Would sing of war and warriors slain
 Old England's brids were vanquished then,
 And Scotland's vaunted Harthornden,
 And, silenced on Iernan shore,
 M'Curtin's harp should charm no more!"—
 In lively mood he spoke, to wile
 From Wilfrid's woe-worn cheek a smile

- 15 "But," said Matilda, "ere thy name,
 Good Redmond, gain its destined fame,
 Say, wilt thou kindly deign to call
 Thy brother minstrel to the hall?
 Bid all the household, too, attend,
 Each in his rank a humble friend,
 I know their faithful hearts will grieve,
 When their poor Mistress takes her leave,
 So let the horn and beaker flow
 To mitigate their parting woe"—
 The Harper came—in youth's first prime
 Himself, in mode of olden time
 His garb was fashioned, to express
 The ancient English minstrel's dress,
 A seemly gown of Kendal green,
 With gorget closed of silver sheen,
 His harp in silken scarf was slung,
 And by his side an anlace hung
 It seemed some masquer's quaint array
 For revel or for holiday

- 16 He made obeisance with a free
 Yet studied air of courtesy
 Each look and accent, framed to please,
 Seemed to affect a playful ease,
 His face was of that doubtful kind
 That wins the eye, but not the mind,
 Yet harsh it seemed to deem amiss
 Of brow so young and smooth as this
 His was the subtle look and sly,
 That, spying all, seems nought to spy,
 Round all the group his glances stole,

Unmarked themselves, to mark the whole,
 Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
 Nor could the eye of Redmond brook
 To the suspicious, or the old,
 Subtle and dangerous and bold
 Had seemed this self-invited guest;
 But young our lovers,—and the rest,
 Wiapt in their sorrow and then fear
 At parting of their mistress dear,
 Tear-blinded to the Castle hall,
 Came as to bear her funeral pall

- 17 All that expression base was gone,
 When waked the guest his minstrel tone;
 It fled at inspiration's call,
 As erst the Demon fled from Saul
 More noble glance he cast around,
 More free-drawn breath inspired the sound,
 His pulse beat bolder and more high,
 In all the pride of minstrelsy!
 Alas! too soon that pride was o'er,
 Sunk with the ly that bade it soar!
 His soul resumed, with habit's chain,
 Its vices wild and follies vain,
 And gave the talent, with him born,
 To be a common curse and scorn
 Such was the youth whom Rokeby's maid,
 With condescending kindness, pryed
 Here to renew the strain she loved,
 At distance heard and well approved

SONG —THE HARP

- 18 I was a wild and wayward boy,
 My childhood scorned each childish toy,
 Retired from all, reserved, and coy,
 To musing prone,
 I wooed my solitary joy,
 My Harp alone
 My youth, with bold Ambition's mood,
 Despised the humble stream and wood,
 Where my poor father's cottage stood,
 To fame unknown,—
 What should my soaring views make good?
 My Harp alone
 Love came with all his frantic fire,
 And wild romance of vain desire,
 The Baron's daughter heard my lyre,
 And prised the tone,—
 What could presumptuous hope inspire?
 My Harp alone
 At Manhood's touch the bubble burst,
 And Manhood's pride the vision curst,

And all that had my folly nursed
 Love's sway to own,
 Yet spued the spell that lulled me first,
 My Harp alone

Woe came with war, and want with woe,
 And it was mine to undergo
 Each outrage of the rebel foe —
 Can fight alone
 My fields had waste, my cot laid low !
 My Harp alone

Ambition's dreams I've seen depart,
 Have rued of penury the smart,
 Have felt of love the venom'd dart
 When hope was flown,
 Yet rests one solace to my heart,—
 My Harp alone !

Then, over mountain, moor, and hill,
 My faithful harp, I'll bear thee still,
 And when this life of want and ill
 Is well-nigh gone,
 Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
 My Harp alone !

- 19 "A pleasing lay!" Matilda said,
 But Harpool shook his old gray head
 And took his baton and his torch,
 To seek his guard-room in the porch
 Edmund observed—with sudden change,
 Among the strings his fingers range,
 Until they waked a boldest glee
 Of military melody,
 Then paused amid the martial sound,
 And looked with well-feigned fear around,—
 "None to this noble house belong,"
 He said, "that would a minstrel wrong,
 Whose fate has been, through good and ill,
 To love his Royal Master still,
 And, with your honoured leave, would fain
 Rejoice you with a loyal strain"—
 Then, as assured by sign and look,
 The unlike tone again he took,
 And Harpool stopped, and turned to hear,
 A ditty of the Cavalier

SONG—THE CAVALIER

- 20 While the dawn of the mountain was misty and gray,
 My True Love has mounted his steed and away,
 Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and o'er down,
 Heaven shield the brave gallant that fights for the Crown
 He has doffed the silk doublet the breastplate to bear,
 And has placed the steel cap o'er his long flowing hair,

Drowned in his own successful skill
 The veteran, too, who now no more
 Aspires to herd the battle's ion,
 Loves still the triumph of his art,
 And traces on the pencilled chart
 Some stern invader's destined way,
 Through blood and ruin to his prey,
 Patriots to death, and towns to flame,
 He dooms, to raise another's name,
 And shares the guilt, though not the same
 What pays him for his span of time
 Spent in premeditated crime?
 What against pity arms his heart?—
 It is the conscious pride of art

- 23 But principles in Edmund's mind
 Were baseless, vague, and undefined
 His soul, like bark with rudder lost,
 On passion's changeful tide was tossed,
 Nor Vice nor Virtue had the power
 Beyond the impression of the hour,
 And, O! when passion rules, how rare
 The hours that fall to Virtue's share!
 Yet now she roused her—for the pride,
 That lack of sterner guilt supplied,
 Could scarce support him when arose
 The lay that mourned Matilda's woes

SONG — THE FAREWELL

The sound of Rokeby's woods I hear
 They mingle with the song,
 Dark Greta's voice is in mine ear,
 I must not hear them long
 From every loved and native haunt
 The native heir must stray,
 And, like a ghost whom sunbeams drunt,
 Must part before the day

Soon from the halls my fathers reved,
 Their scutcheons may descend
 A line so long beloved and feared
 May soon obscurely end
 No longer here Matilda's tone
 Shall bid these echoes swell,
 Yet shall they hear her proudly own
 The cause in which we fell

The Lady paused, and then again
 Resumed the lay in loftier strain

Let our halls and towers decay,
 Be our name and line forgot,
 Lands and manors pass away,—
 We but share our monarch's lot

If no more our annual show
 Battle won and banners taken,
 Still in death, defeat, and woe,
 Ours be loyalty unshaken!

Constant still in danger's hour,
 Princes owned our fathers' aid,
 Lands and honours, wealth and power,
 Well their loyalty repaid
 Perish wealth, and power, and pride!
 Mortal boons by mortals given,
 But let Constancy abide,
 Constancy—the gift of Heaven

25 While thus Matilda's lay was heard,
 A thousand thoughts in Edmund stirred
 In peasant life he might have known
 As fair a face, as sweet a tone,
 But village notes could ne'er supply
 That rich and varied melod,
 And ne'er in cottage mud was seen
 The easy dignity of men,
 Claiming respect, yet waving state,
 That marks the daughters of the great
 Yet not, perchance, had these alone
 His scheme of purposed guilt o'erthrown,
 But, while her energy of mind
 Superior rose to griefs combined,
 Lending its kindling to her eye,
 Giving her form new majesty,—
 To Edmund's thought Matilda seemed
 The very object he had dreamed,
 When, long ere guilt his soul had known,
 In Winston bowers he mused alone,
 Tracing his fancy to combine
 The face, the air, the voice divine,
 Of princess fair, by cruel fate
 Rest of her honours, power, and state,
 Till to her rightful realm restored
 By destined hero's conquering sword

26 "Such was my vision!" Edmund thought,
 "And have I, then, the ruin wrought
 Of such a mud, that fancy ne'er
 In furest vision formed her peer?
 Was it my hand that could uncloze
 The postern to her ruthless foes?
 Foes, lost to honour, law, and faith,
 Their kindest mercy sudden death!
 Have I done this? I! who have sworn,
 That if the globe such angel bore,
 I would have traced its circle broad,
 To kiss the ground on which she trod!—

And now—O ! would that earth would rive,
 And close upon me while alive !—
 Is there no hope ? Is all then lost ?—
 Bertram's already on his post !
 Even now, beside the hall's arched door,
 I saw his shadow cross the floor !
 He was to wait my signal strain—
 A little respite thus we gain—
 By what I heard the menials say,
 Young Wycliffe's troop are on their way—
 Alarm precipitates the crime !
 My harp must wear away the time"—
 And then, in accents faint and low,
 He faltered forth a tale of woe

BALLAD

- 27 "And whither would you lead me, then?"
 Quoth the Friar of orders gray,
 And the rustians twain replied again,
 "By a dying woman to pray"—
 "I see," he said, "a lovely sight,
 A sight bodes little harm,
 A lady as a lily bright,
 With an infant on her arm"—
 "Then do thine office, Friar gray,
 And see thou shrive her free !
 Else shall the sprite, that parts to-night,
 Fling all its guilt on thee
 "Let mass be said, and trentals read
 When thou'rt to convent gone,
 And bid the bell of St Benedict
 Toll out its deepest tone"—
 The shrift is done, the Friar is gone,
 Blindfolded as he came—
 Next morning, all in Littlecote Hall
 Were weeping for their dame
 Wild Darrell is an altered man,
 The village crones can tell,
 He looks pale as clay, and strives to pray,
 If he hears the convent bell
 If prince or peer cross Darrell's way
 He'll beard him in his pride—
 If he meet a Friar of orders gray,
 He droops and turns aside
 28 "Harper ! methinks thy magic lays,"
 Matilda said, "can goblins raise !"
 Well nigh my fancy can discern,
 Near the dark porch, a visage stern,
 L'en now, in yonder shadowy nook,

I see it !—Redmond, Wilfrid, look !—
 A human form distinct and clear—
 God, for thy mercy !—It draws near !”—
 She saw too true Stride after stride,
 The centre of that chamber wide
 Fierce Bertram grined, then made a stand,
 And, proudly waving with his hand,
 Thundered—“Be still, upon your lives !
 He bleeds who speaks, he dies who strikes ”—
 Behind their chief, the robber crew
 Forth from the darkened portal drew,
 In silence—save that echo drear
 Returned their heavy measured tread
 The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
 Their arms to gleam, their plumes to wave
 File after file in order pass,
 Like forms on Banquo's mystic glass
 Then, halting at their leader's sign,
 At once they formed and curved their line,
 Hemming within its crescent drear
 Their victims, like a herd of deer
 Another sign, and to the aim
 Levelled at once their muskets came,
 As waiting but their chieftain's word,
 To make their fatal volley heard

- 29 Back in a heap the menials drew,
 Yet, even in mortal terror, true,
 Their pale and startled group oppose
 Between Matilda and the foes
 “O, haste thee, Wilfrid !” Redmond cried,
 “Undo that wicket by thy side !
 Bear hence Matilda—gain the wood—
 The pass may be a while made good—
 Thy band, ere this, must sure be nigh—
 O speak not—dally not—but fly !”—
 While yet the crowd their motions hide,
 Through the low wicket door they glide
 Through vaulted passages they wind,
 In Gothic intricacy twined
 Wilfrid half led, and half he bore,
 Matilda to the postern door,
 And safe beneath the forest tree
 The Lady stands at liberty
 The moonbeams, the fresh gales caress,
 Renewed suspended consciousness —
 “Where's Redmond ?” eagerly she cries .
 “Thou answer'st not—he dies ! he dies !
 And thou hast left him, all bereft
 Of mortal aid—with murderers left !—
 I know it well—he would not yield
 His sword to man—his doom is sealed !

For my scorned life, which thou hast bought
At price of his, I thank thee not"—

- 30 The unjust reproach, the angry look,
The heart of Wilfrid could not brook.
"Lady," he said, "my hand so near,
In safety thou mayst rest thee here
For Redmond's death thou shalt not mourn,
If mine can buy his safe return"—
He turned away—his heart throbb'd high,
The tear was bursting from his eye
The sense of her injustice press'd
Upon the maid's distracted breast,—
"Stay, Wilfrid, stay! all aid is vain!"—
He heard, but turned him not again
And now he gains the postern door,
Now enters—and is seen no more
- 31 With all the agony that e'er
Was gendered 'twixt suspense and fear
She watched the line of windows tall,
Whose Gothic lattice lights the hall,
Distinguished by the paly red
The lamps in dim reflection shed,
While all beside in wan moonlight
Each grated casement glimmered white
No sight of harm, no sound of ill,
It is a deep and midnight still
Who looked upon the scene had guessed
All in the castle were at rest
When sudden on the windows shone
A lightning flash, just seen and gone!
A shot is heard—Again the flame
Flashed thick and fast—a volley came!
Then echoed wildly, from within,
Of shout and scream the mingled din,
And weapon-clash and maddening cry
Of those who kill, and those who die!
As filled the hall with sulphurous smoke,
More red, more dark, the death-flash broke
And forms were on the lattice cast,
That struck, or struggled, as they pass'd.
- 32 What sounds upon the midnight wind
Approach so rapidly behind?
It is, it is the tramp of steeds!
Matilda hears the sound, she speeds,
Seizes upon the leader's rein—
"O haste to aid, ere aid be vain!
Fly to the postern—gain the hall!"—
From saddle spring the troopers aid,
Their gallant steeds, at liberty,
Run wild along the moonlight lea
But, ere they burst upon the scene,

While, trampling down the dying man,
He strove, with volleyed threat and ban,
In scorn of odds, in fate's despite,
To rally up the desperate fight

- 34 Soon murkier clouds the hall enfold,
Than e'er from battle-thunders rolled,
So dense, the combatants scarce knew
To aim or to avoid the blow
Smothering and blindfold grows the fight—
But soon shall dawn a dismal light!
'Mid cries, and clashing arms, there came
The hollow sound of rushing flame,
New horrors on the tumult dire
Arise—the castle is on fire!
Doubtful, if chance had cast the brand,
Or frantic Bertram's desperate hand
Matilda saw—for frequent broke
From the dim casements gusts of smoke
Yon tower, which late so clear defined
On the fair hemisphere reclined,
That, pencilled on its azure pure,
The eye could count each embrasure,
Now, swathed within the sweeping cloud,
Seems giant-spectre in his shroud,
Till, from each loop-hole flashing light,
A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
And, gathering to united glare,
Streams high into the midnight air,
A dismal beacon, far and wide,
That wakened Gretta's slumbering side
Soon all beneath, through gallery long
And pendent arch, the fire flashed strong,
Snatching whatever could maintain
Ruse, or extend its furious reign,
Stutling, with closer cause of dread,
The females who the conflict fled,
And now rushed forth upon the plain,
Filling the air with clamours vain
- 35 But ceased not yet, the hall within,
The shriek, the shout, the carnage-dim,
Till bursting lattices give proof
The flames have caught the raftered roof
What! wait they till its beams amain
Crash on the slayers and the slain?
The alarm is caught—the drawbridge falls,
The warriors hurry from the walls,
But, by the conflagration's light,
Upon the lawn renew the fight
Each straggling felon down was hewed,
Not one could gain the sheltering wood.
But forth the affrighted Harper sprung,

And to Matilda's robe he clung
Her shriek, entreaty, and command,
Stopped the pursuer's lifted hand.
Derzel and he alive were t'een,
The rest, save Bertram, all are slain

- 36 And where is Bertram?—Soaring high,
The general flame ascends the sky,
In gathered group the soldiers gaze
Upon the broad and roaring blaze,
When, like infernal demon, sent
Red from his penal element.
To plague and to pollute the air,—
His face all gore, on fire his hair,
Forth from the central mass of smoke
The giant form of Bertram broke '
His brandished sword on high he rears,
Then plunged among opposing spears;
Round his left arm his mantle trussed
Received and foiled three lances' thrust,
Nor these his headlong course withstood,
Like reeds he snapped the tough ash-wood
In vain his foes around him clung,
With matchless force aside he flung
Their boldest,—as the bull at bay,
Tosses the ban-dogs from his way.
Through forty foes his path he made,
And safely gained the forest glade.

- 37 Scarce was this final conflict o'er,
When from the postern Redmond bore
Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,
Had in the fatal hall been left,
Deserted there by all his train,
But Redmond saw, and turned again —
Beneath an oak he laid him down,
That in the blaze gleamed ruddy brown,
And then his mantle's clasp undid,
Matilda held his drooping head,
Till, given to breathe the freer air,
Returning life repaid their care.
He gazed on them with heavy sigh,—
"I could have wished even thus to die!"—
No more he said—for row with speed
Each trooper had regained his steed;
The ready palfreys stood arrayed,
For Redmond and for Rokeby's Maid;
Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
One leads his charger by the rein.
But oft Matilda looked behind,
As up the vale of Tees they wind
Where far the mansion of her sires
Beaconed the dale with midnight fires.

In gloomy arch above them spread,
 The clouded heaven lowered bloody red;
 Beneath, in sombre light, the flood
 Appeared to roll in waves of blood
 Then, one by one, was heard to fall
 The tower, the donjon-keep, the hall
 Each rushing down with thunder sound,
 A space the conflagration drov'ned,
 Till, gathering strength, again it rose,
 Announced its triumph in its close,
 Shook wide its light the landscape o'er,
 Then sunk—and Rokeby was no more!

CANTO SIXTH

- I THE summer sun, whose early power
 Was wont to gild Matilda's bower,
 And rouse her with his matin ray
 Her duteous orisons to pray,
 That morning sun has three times seen
 The flowers unfold on Rokeby green,
 But sees no more the slumbers fly
 From fair Matilda's hazel eye,
 That morning sun has three times broke
 On Rokeby's glades of elm and oak,
 But, rising from their sylvan screen,
 Marks no gray turret's glance between!
 A shapeless mass lie keep and tower,
 That, hissing to the morning shower,
 Can but with smouldering vapour pay
 The early smile of summer day
 The peasant, to his labour bound,
 Pauses to view the blackened mound,
 Striving, amid the ruined space,
 Each well-remembered spot to trace
 That length of frail and fire scorched wall
 Once screened the hospitable hall,
 When yonder broken arch was whole,
 'Twas there was dealt the weekly dole,
 And where yon tottering columns nod,
 The chapel sent the hymn to God
 So flits the world's uncertain span!
 Nor zeal for God, nor love for man,
 Gives mortal monuments a date
 Beyond the power of Time and Fate
 The towers must share the builder's doom,
 Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb
 But better boon benignant Heaven
 To Faith and Charity has given,
 And bids the Christian hope sublime
 Transcend the bounds of Fate and Time

- 2 Now the third night of summer came,
 Since that which witnessed Rokeby's flame
 On Brignal cliffs and Scaigill brake
 The owl's homilies wake,
 The bittern screamed from rush and flag,
 The raven slumbered on his crag,
 Forth from his den the otter dived,—
 Gyring and trout their tyrant knew,
 As between reed and sedge he peers,
 With fierce round snout and sharpened ears,
 Or, prowling by the moonbeam cool,
 Watches the stream or swims the pool,—
 Perched on his wonted eyrie high,
 Sleep sealed the tercelet's wearied eye,
 That all the day had watched so well
 The cushat dart across the dell
 In dubious beam reflected shone
 That lofty cliff of pale gray stone,
 Beside whose base the secret cave
 To rapine late a refuge gave
 The crag's wild crest of copse and Jew
 On Greta's breast dark shadows threw,
 Shadows that met or shunned the sight
 With every change of fitful light,
 As hope and fear alternate chase
 Our course through life's uncertain race
- 3 Gliding by crag and copsewood green,
 A solitary Form was seen
 To trace with stealthy pace the wold,
 Like fox that seeks the midnight fold,
 And pauses oft, and cowers dismayed,
 At every breath that stirs the shade
 He passes now the ivy bush,
 The owl has seen him and his hush,
 He passes now the doddered oak,
 He heard the startled raven croak,
 Lower and lower he descends,
 Rustle the leaves, the brushwood bends;
 The otter hears him near the shore,
 And dives, and is beheld no more,
 And by the cliff of pale gray stone
 The midnight wanderer stands alone.
 Methinks that by the moon we trace
 A well-remembered form and face!
 That stripling shape, that cheek so pale,
 Combine to tell a rueful tale,
 Of powers misused, of passion's force,
 Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse!
 'Tis Edmund's eye at every sound
 That flings that guilty glance around,
 'Tis Edmund's trembling haste divides

The brushwood that the cavern hides,
And, when its narrow porch lies bare,
'Tis Edmund's form that enters there

- 4 His flint and steel have sparkled bright,
A lamp hath lent the cavern light
Fearful and quick his eye surveys
Each angle of the gloomy maze
Since last he left that stern abode,
It seemed as none its floor had trod,
Untouched appeared the various spoil,
The purchase of his comrades' toil,
Masks and disguises grimed with mud,
Arms broken and defiled with blood,
And all the nameless tools that aid
Night-felons in their lawless trade,
Upon the gloomy walls were hung,
Or lay in nooks obscurely flung
Still on the sordid board appear
The relics of the noontide cheer,
Flagons and empty flasks were there,
And bench o'erthrown, and shattered chair,
And all around the semblance showed,
As when the final revel glowed,
When the red sun was setting fast,
And parting pledge Guy Denzil passed
To Rokeby treasure-vaults! they quaffed,
And shouted loud and wildly laughed,
Poured maddening from the rocky door,
And parted—to return no more!
They found in Rokeby vaults their doom,—
A bloody death, a burning tomb
- 5 There his own peasant dress he spies,
Doffed to assume that quaint disguise,
And shuddering thought upon his glee,
When pranked in garb of minstrels,
“O, be the fatal art recursed,”
He cried, “that moved my folly first,
Till, bribed by bandits' base applause,
I burst through God's and Nature's laws!
Thrice summer days are scantily passed
Since I have trod this cavern last,
A thoughtless wretch, and prompt to err—
But, O, as yet no murderer!
Even now I list my comrades' cheer,
That general laugh is in mine ear,
Which roused my pulse and steeled my heart,
As I rehearsed my treacherous part—
And would that all since then could seem
The phantom of a fever's dream!
But fatal Memory notes too well
The horrors of the dying yell,

From my despairing mates that broke,
When flashed the fire and rolled the smoke,
When the avengers shouting came,
And hemmed us 'twixt the sword and flame'
My frantic flight—the lifted brand—
That angel's interposing hand'—
If for my life from slaughter freed,
I yet could pay some grateful meed'—
Perchance this object of my quest
May aid"—he turned, nor spoke the rest

- 6 Due northward from the rugged hearth,
With paces five he metes the earth,
Then toiled with mattock to explore
The entrails of the cavern floor,
Nor paused till, deep beneath the ground,
His search a small steel casket found
Just as he stooped to loose its hrisp,
His shoulder felt a giant grasp,
He started and looked up aghast,
Then shrieked!—twas Bertram held him fast
"Fear not!" he said, but who could hear
That deep stern voice, and cease to fear?
"Fear not!—by heaven he shall es as much
As partridge in the falcon's clutch!"—
He raised him, and unloosed his hold,
While from the opening casket rolled
A chun and reliquaure of gold
Bertram beheld it with surprise,
Gazed on its fashion and device,
Then, cheering Edmund as he could,
Somewhat he smoothed his rugged mood,
For still the youth's half-lifted eye
Quivered with terror's agony,
And sidelong glanced, as to explore,
In meditated flight, the door
"Sit," Bertram said, 'from danger free,
Thou canst not, and thou shalt not flee

A guest the third and morrow brought,
 Our hold dark Oswald Wycliffe sought
 And eyed my comrade long askance,
 With fixed and penetrating glance
 'Guy Denzil art thou called?'—'The same'
 'At Court who served wild Buckingham,
 Thence banished, won a keeper's place,
 So Villiers willed, in Marwood-chase,
 That lost—I need not tell thee why—
 Thou madest thy wit thy wants supply,
 Then fought for Rokeby—have I guessed
 My prisoner right?'—'At thy behest'—
 He paused a while, and then went on
 With low and confidential tone,
 Me, as I judge, not then he saw,
 Close nestled in my couch of straw—
 'List to me, Guy—Thou know'st the great
 Have frequent need of what they hate,
 Hence, in their favour oft we see
 Unscrupled, useful men like thee
 Were I disposed to bid thee live,
 What pledge of faith hast thou to give?'—

- 8 "The ready fiend, who never yet
 Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's wit,
 Prompted his lie—'His only child
 Should rest his pledge'—The Baron smiled,
 And turned to me—'Thou art his son?'
 I bowed—our fetters were undone,
 And we were led to hear apart
 A dreadful lesson of his art
 Wilfrid, he said, his heir and son,
 Had won Matilda's favour won,
 And long since had their union been,
 But for her father's bigot spleen,
 Whose brute and blindfold party rage
 Would, force per force, her hand engage
 To a base keene of Irish earth,
 Unknown his lineage and his birth,
 Save that a dying ruffian bore
 The infant brat to Rokeby door
 Gentle restraint, he said, would lead
 Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed,
 But for occasion he must find
 For such restraint well-meant and kind,
 The knight being rendered to his charge
 But as a prisoner at large
- 9 "He schooled us in a well forged tale,
 Of scheme the castle walls to scale,
 To which was leagued each cavalier
 That dwells upon the Tyne and Wear,
 That Rokeby, his parole forgot,

Had dealt with us to aid the plot
 Such was the charge, which Denzil's zeal
 Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale
 Proffered, as witness, to make good,
 Even though the forfeit were their blood
 I scrupled, until o'er and o'er
 His prisoners' safety Wycliffe swore,
 And then—alas! what needs there more?
 I knew I should not live to say
 The proffer I refused that day,
 Ashamed to live, yet loth to die,
 I soiled me with their infamy!"
 "Poor youth," said Bertram, "wavering still,
 Unfit alike for good or ill!
 But what fell next?"—"Soon as at large
 Was scrolled and signed our fatal charge,
 There never yet, on tragic stage,
 Was seen so well a painted rage
 As Oswald's showed! with loud alarm
 He called his garrison to arm,
 From tower to tower, from post to post,
 He hurried as if all were lost,
 Consigned to dungeon and to chain
 The good old knight and all his train,
 Warned each suspected cavalier,
 Within his limits, to appear
 To-morrow, at the hour of noon,
 In the high church of Eglistone"

- 10 "Of Eglistone! Even now I passed,"
 Said Bertram, "as the night closed fast,
 Torches and cressets gleamed around,
 I heard the saw and hammer sound,
 And I could mark they toiled to raise
 A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
 Which the grim herald's scene displayed,
 Block, axe, and sawdust ready laid
 Some evil deed will there be done,
 Unless Matilda wed his son,—
 She loves him not—'tis shrewdly guessed
 That Redmond rules the damsel's breast
 'Tis a turn of Oswald's skill,
 But I may meet and feel him still!—
 How camest thou to thy freedom?"—"There
 Lies mystery more dark and rare
 In midst of Wycliffe's well-feigned rage,
 A scroll was offered by a page,
 Who told, a muffled horseman late
 Had left it at the castle gate
 He broke the seal—his cheek showed change,
 Sudden, portentous, wild, and strange,
 The mimic passion of his eye

Was turned to actual agony,
 His hand like summer sapling shook,
 Fear and guilt were in his look
 Denzil he judged, in time of need,
 Fit counsellor for evil deed,
 And thus apart his counsel broke,
 While with a ghastly smile he spoke —

- 11 “As in the pageants of the stage,
 The dead awake in this wild age
 Mortham,—whom all men deemed decreed
 In his own deadly snare to bleed,
 Slain by a bravo, whom, o’er sea,
 He trained to aid in murdering me,—
 Mortham has ’scaped, the coward shot
 The steed, but harmed the rider not’”—
 Here, with an execration fell,
 Bertram leaped up, and paced the cell,—
 “Thine own gray head, or bosom dark,”
 He muttered, “may be surer mark!”
 Then sat, and signed to Edmund, pale
 With terror, to resume his tale.
 “Wycliffe went on — ‘Mark with what flights
 Of wildered reverie he writes

THE LETTER

- “‘Ruler of Mortham’s destiny’
 Though dead, thy victim lives to thee
 Once had he all that binds to life,
 A lovely child, a lovelier wife,
 Wealth, fame, and friendship, were his own—
 Thou gavest the word, and they are flown
 Mark how he prays thee —to thy hand
 He yields his honours and his land,
 One boon premised,—Restore his child’
 And, from his native land exiled,
 Mortham no more returns to claim
 His lands, his honours, or his name,
 Refuse him this, and from the slain
 Thou shalt see Mortham rise again’
- 12 “This billet while the Baron read,
 His faltering accents showed his dread,
 He pressed his forehead with his palm,
 Then took a scornful tone and calm,
 ‘Wild as the winds, as billows wild’
 What wot I of his spouse or child?
 Hither he brought a joyous dame,
 Unknown her lineage or her name
 Her, in some frantic fit, he slew,
 The nurse and child in fear withdrew
 Heaven be my witness! wist I where
 To find this youth, my kinsman’s heir,—

Unguarded, I would give with joy
The father's arms to fold his boy,
And Mortham's lands and towers resign
To the just heirs of Mortham's line'—
Thou know'st that scarcely e'en his fear
Suppresses Denzil's cynic sneer,—
'Then happy is thy vassal's part,'
He said, 'to ease his patron's heart'
In thine own jailer's watchful care
Lies Mortham's just and rightful heir,
Thy generous wish is fully won,—
Redmond O'Neale is Mortham's son'—

- 13 "Up starting with a frenzied look,
His clenched hand the Baron shook.
'Is Hell at work? or dost thou rave,
Or darest thou palter with me, slave'
Perchance thou wotest not, Barnard's towers
Have racks, of strange and ghastly powers'—
Denzil, who well his safety knew,
Firmly rejoined, 'I tell thee true
Thy racks could give thee but to know
The proofs, which I, untortured, show —
It chanced upon a winter night,
When early snow made Stanmore white,
That very night, the first of all
Redmond O'Neale's Rokeby-hall,
It was my good fortune here the gun
A reliquary and gift returned
Twisted and charred, and drossive gold
—Demand not how the prize I hold'
It was not given, nor sold, nor bought —
Gilt tablets to the chapel were hung,
With letters in the Irish tongue
I hid my spoil, for there was need
That I should leave the land with speed,
Nor then I deemed it safe to bear
On mine own person gems so rare.
Small heed I of the tablets took,
But since have spelled them by the book,
When some sojourn in Erin's land
Of their wild speech had given command
But darkling was the sense the phrase
And language those of other days,
Involved of purpose, as to foil
An interloper's prying toil
The words, but not the sense I knew,
Till fortune gave the guiding clue.

14. "Three days since was that clue revealed
In Thorsgill as I lay concealed,
And heard at full when Rokeby's Maid
Her uncle's history displayed,

And now I can interpret well
 Each syllable the tablets tell
 Mark, then Fair Edith was the joy
 Of old O'Neale of Clondeboy,
 But from her sire and country fled,
 In secret Mortham's Lord to wed
 O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
 Despatched his son to Greta's shore,
 Enjoining he should make him known
 (Until his farther will were shown,)
 To Edith, but to her alone
 What of their ill-starred meeting fell,
 Lord Wycliffe knows, and none so well

- 15 "O'Neale it was, who, in disdain,
 Robbed Mortham of his infant heir,
 He bled him in their nurture wild,
 And called him murdered Connal's child
 Soon died the nurse, the clan believed
 What from their chieftain they received
 His purpose was, that ne'er again
 The boy should cross the Irish main,
 But, like his mountain sires, enjoy
 The woods and wastes of Clondeboy
 Then on the land wild troubles came,
 And stronger chieftains urged a claim,
 And wrested from the's destiny's hands
 His native towers, his native lands
 Unable, then, amid his binds to,
 To guard young Regelier's rights or life,
 Late and reluctant friend to
 The infant to his native shores,
 With goodly gifts and letters stored
 With many a deep conjuring word,
 To Mortham and to Rokeby's Lord
 Nought knew the clod of Irish earth,
 Who was the guide, of Redmond's birth,
 But deemed his chief's commands were laid
 On both, by both to be obeyed
 How he was wounded by the way
 I need not, and I list not say—"

- 16 "A wondrous tale and, grant it true,
 What, Wycliffe answered, 'might I do?—
 Heaven knows, as willingly as now
 I raise the bonnet from my brow,
 Would I my kinsman's manors fair
 Restore to Mortham, or his heir,
 But Mortham is distraught—O'Neale
 Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
 Malignant to'd chrightful Cause,
 And tramed in some's delusive laws
 Hark thee apart!—They whispered long

Lill Denzil's voice grew bold and strong —
 'My proofs! I never will,' he said,
 'Show mortal man where they are laid
 Nor hope discovery to foreclose
 By giving me to feed the crows,
 For I have mates at large, who know
 Where I am wont such toys to stow
 Free me from peril and from band,
 These tablets are at thy command,
 Nor were it hard to form some train
 To wile old Mortham o'er the main
 Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
 Should wrest from thine the goodly hand' —
 —'I like thy wit,' said Wycliffe, 'well,
 But here in hostage shalt thou dwell
 Thy son, unless my purpose err,
 May prove the trustier messenger
 A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
 From me, and fetch these tokens rare.
 Gold shalt thou have and that good store,
 And freedom, his commission o'er,
 But if his faith should chance to fail,
 The gibbet frees thee from the jail' —

- 17 "Meshed in the net himself had twined,
 What subterfuge could Denzil find?
 He told me, with reluctant sigh,
 That hidden here the tokens lie,
 Conjured my swift return and aid,
 By all he scoffed and disobeyed,
 And looked as if the roose were tied,
 And I the priest who left his side
 'This scroll for Mortham Wycliffe gave,
 Whom I must seek by Greta's wave,
 Or in the hut where chief he hides,
 Where Thorsgill's forester resides,
 (Thence chanced it, wandering in the glade,
 That he descried our ambuscade)
 I was dismissed as evening fell,
 And reached but now this rocky cell" —
 "Give Oswald's letter" — Beatriam read,
 And tore it fiercely, shued by shred —
 "All lies and villany" to blind
 His noble kinsman's generous mind,
 And train him on from day to day,
 Till he can take his life away —
 And now, declare thy purpose, youth,
 Nor dare to answer, save the truth,
 If aught I mark of Denzil's art,
 I'll tear the secret from thy heart!" —

- 18 "It needs not I renounce," he said,
 "My tutor and his deadly trade

Fixed was my purpose to declare
 To Mortham, Redmond is his heir;
 To tell him in what risk he stands,
 And yield these tokens to his hands
 Fixed was my purpose to atone,
 Far as I may, the evil done,
 And fixed it rests—if I survive
 This night, and leave this eve alive"—
 "And Denzil?"—"Let them ply the rack,
 Even till his joints and sinews crack'
 If Oswald tear him limb from limb,
 What ruth can Denzil claim from him
 Whose thoughtless youth he led astray,
 And dinned to this unhallowed way?
 He schooled me, faith and vows were vain,
 Now let my master reap his gain"—
 "True," answered Bertram, "'tis his need,
 There's retribution in the deed
 But thou—thou art not for our course,
 Hast fear, hast pity, hast remorse,
 And he, with us the gale who braves,
 Must leave such cargo to the waves,
 Or lag with overloaded prore,
 While barks unburdened reach the shore"—

- 19 He paused, and, stretching him at length,
 Seemed to repose his bulky strength
 Communing with his secret mind,
 As half he sat, and half reclined,
 One ample hand his forehead pressed,
 And one was dropped across his breast
 The shaggy eyebrows deeper came
 Above his eyes of swarthy flame,
 His lip of pride awhile forbore
 The haughty curve till then it wore,
 The unaltered fierceness of his look
 A shade of darkened sadness took,—
 For dark and sad a presage pressed,
 Resistlessly on Bertram's breast,—
 And when he spoke, his wonted tone,
 So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was gone,
 His voice was steady, low, and deep,
 Like distant waves when breezes sleep,
 And sorrow mixed with Edmund's fear,
 Its low unbroken depth to hear.
- 20 "Edmund, in thy sad tale I find
 The woe that warped my patron's mind,
 'Twould wake the fountains of the eye
 In other men, but mine are dry
 Mortham must never see the fool
 That sold himself base Wycliffe's tool
 Yet less from thirst of sordid gain

Than to avenge supposed disdain
 Say, Bertram rues his fault,—a word,
 Till now, from Bertram never heard
 Say, too, that Mortham's lord he prays
 To think but on their former days
 On Quarian's beach and rock,
 On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
 On Darien's sands and deadly dew,
 And on the dart Tlatzeca thiew,—
 Perchance my patron yet may hear
 More that may grace his comrade's bier
 My soul hath felt a secret weight,
 A warning of approaching fate
 A priest had said, 'Return, repent !'
 As well to bid that rock be rent
 Firm as that flint I face mine end,
 My heart may burst but cannot bend.

21 "The dawning of my youth, with awe
 And prophecy, the Dalesmen saw,
 For over Redesdale it came,
 As bodeful as their beacon-flame
 Edmund, thy years were scarcely mine,
 When, challenging the Clans of Tyne
 To bring their best my brand to prove,
 O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove,
 But Tynedale, nor in tower nor town,
 Held champion meet to take it down
 My noontide, Indra may declare,
 Like her fierce Sun, I fired the air !
 Like him, to wood and cave bade fly
 Her natives, from mine angry eye
 Panam's maids shall long look pale
 When Risingham inspires the tale,
 Chili's dark matrons long shall time
 The froward child with Bertram's name.
 And now, my race of terror run,
 Mine be the eve of tropic Sun !
 No pale gradations quench his ray,
 No twilight dews his wrath allay ;
 With disk like battle-target red,
 He rushes to his burning bed,
 Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
 Then sinks at once—and all is night

22 "Now to thy mission, Edmund Fly,
 Seek Mortham out, and bid him hie
 To Richmond, where his troops are laid,
 And lead his force to Redmond's aid
 Say, till he reaches Eglistone,
 A friend will watch to guard his son
 Now, fare thee well, for night draws on,
 And I would rest me here alone"—

Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
 There swam in Edmund's eye a tear,
 A tribute to the courage high
 Which stooped not in extremity,
 But strove, irregularly great,
 To triumph o'er approaching fate!
 Bertram beheld the dew-drop start,
 It almost touched his iron-heart —
 "I did not think thee lived," he said,
 "One who would tear for Bertram shed" —
 He loosened then his baldric's hold
 A buckle broad of massive gold, —
 "Of all the spoil that paid his pains,
 But this with Risingham remains,
 And this, dear Edmund, thou shalt take,
 And wear it long for Bertram's sake
 Once more—to Mortham speed amon,
 Farewell! and turn thee not again" —

- 23 The night has yielded to the morn,
 And for the hours of prime are worn
 Oswald, who, since the dawn of day,
 Had cursed his messenger's delay,
 Impatient questioned now his train,
 "Was Denzil's son returned again?" —
 It chanced there answered of the crew,
 A menial, who young Edmund knew
 "No son of Denzil this," he said,
 "A peasant boy from Winston glade,
 For song and minstrelsy renowned,
 And knavish pranks, the hamlets round" —
 —"Not Denzil's son!—from Winston glade —
 Then it was false, that specious tale,
 Or, worse—he hath despatched the youth
 To show to Mortham's lord its truth
 Fool that I was!—but 'tis too late, —
 This is the very turn of fate! —
 The tale, or true or false relies
 On Denzil's evidence —He dies! —
 —Ho! Provost Marshal! instantly
 Lead Denzil to the gallows-tree!
 Allow him not a parting word,
 Short be the shrift, and sure the cord!
 Then let his gory head appal
 Murders from the castle wall
 Lead forth thy guard, that duty done,
 With best despatch to Eglistone —
 —Basil, tell Wilfrid he must straight
 Attend me at the castle gate" —

- 24 "Alas!" the old domestic said,
 And shook his venerable head,
 'Alas, my Lord! full ill to day

May my young master brook the way!
 The leech has spoke with grave alarm,
 Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
 Of sorrow lurking at the heart,
 That mars and lets his healing art "
 —"Tush, tell not me!"—Romantic boys
 Pine themselves sick for airy toys
 I will find cure for Wilfrid soon,
 Bid him for Eglstone be bouned,
 And quick—I hear the dull death-drum
 Tell Denzil's hour of fate is come"—
 He pruned with scornful smile, and then
 Resumed his train of thought agen
 "Now comes my fortune's crisis near!
 Entirety boots not—instant fear,
 Nought else, can bend Matilda's pride,
 Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride
 But when she sees the scaffold placed,
 With axe and block and headsman graced,
 And when she deems that to deny
 Dooms Redmond and her sire to die,
 She must give way—Then, were the line
 Of Rokeby once combined with mine,
 I gain the weather-gage of fate!
 If Northam come, he comes too late,
 While I, allied thus and prepared,
 Bid him defiance to his beard—
 —If she prove stubborn, shall I dare
 To drop the axe?—soft! pause we there
 Northam still lives—yon youth may tell
 His tale—and Fairfax loves him well,—
 Else, wherefore should I now delay
 To sweep this Redmond from my way?—
 But she to piety perforce
 Must yield—Without there! Sound to horse!"—

- 25 'Twas bustle in the court below—
 "Mount, and march forward!"—forth they go,
 Steeds neigh and trample all around,
 Steel rings, spears glimmer, trumpets sound—
 Just then was sung his parting hymn;
 And Denzil turned his eyeballs dim,
 And scarcely conscious what he sees,
 Follows the horsemen down the Tees,
 And scarcely conscious what he hears,
 The trumpets tingle in his ears
 O'er the long bidge they're sweeping now,
 The van is hid by greenwood bough,
 But ere the rearward had passed o'er,
 Guy Denzil heard and saw no more!
 One stroke, upon the castle bell,
 To Oswald rung his dying knell

- 26 O for that pencil, erst profuse
Of chivalry's emblazoned hues,
That traced of old, in Woodstocke bower,
The pageant of the Leaf and Flower,
And bodied forth the tourney high,
Held for the hand of Sir ly!
Then might I paint the tumult broad
That to the crowded abbey flowed
And poured, as with an ocean's sound,
Into the church's ample bound!
Then might I show each varying mien,
Exulting, woeful or serene,
Indifference with his idiot stare,
And Sympath, with anxious air,
Paint the dejected Cavalier,
Doubtful, disarmed, and sad of cheer,
And his proud foe, whose formal eye
Claimed conquest now and mastery,
And the brute crowd, whose envious zeal
Huzzas each turn of Fortune's wheel,
And loudest shouts when lowest lie
Exalted worth and station high
Yet what may such a wish avail?
'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,
Harrying, as best I can along,
The hearers and the hasty song,—
Like traveller when approaching home,
Who sees the shades of evening come,
And must not now his course delay,
Or choose the fur, but winning way.
Now scarcely may his pace suspend,
Where o'er his head the wildings bend,
To bless the breeze that cools his brow,
Or snatch a blossom from the bough
- 27 The reverend pile lay wild and waste,
Profaned, dishonoured, and defaced
Through storied lattices no more
In softened light the sunbeams pour,
Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
Of shrine, and monument, and niche.
The Civil fury of the time
Made sport of sacrilegious crime;
For a rash Fanaticism rent
Altar, and screen, and ornament
And peasant hands the tombs of evilrew
Of Bores, of Rokeby, and Fitz-Hugh
And I now was seen unthought sight,
In holy walls a scaffold dight!
Where once the priest, of grace divine
Dealt to his flock the mystic sign
There stood the block displayed, and there

The headsman grim his hatchet bare,
And for the word of Hope and Faith,
Resounded loud a doom of death
Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath was heard.
And echoed thrice the herald's word,
Dooming, for breach of martial laws,
And treason to the Commons' cause,
The Knight of Rokeby and O'Neale
To stoop their heads to block and steel
The trumpets flourished high and shrill,
Then was a silence dead and still,
And silent prayers to heaven were cast,
And stifled sobs were bursting fast,
Till from the crowd began to rise
Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
And from the distant aisles there came
Deep-muttered threats, with Wycliffe's name

- 28 But Oswald, guarded by his band,
Powerful in evil, waved his hand,
And bade Sedition's voice be dead
On peril of the murmurer's head
Then first his glance sought Rokeby's Knight,
Who gazed on the tremendous sight,
As calm as if he came a guest
To kindred Baidon's feudal feast,
As calm as if that trumpet-call
Were summons to the bannered hall,
Firm in his loyalty he stood,
And prompt to seal it with his blood
With downcast look drew Oswald nigh,—
He durst not cope with Rokeby's eye!—
And said, with low and faltering breath,
“Thou know'st the terms of life and death”
The Knight then turned, and sternly smiled
“The maiden is mine only child,
Yet shall my blessing leave her head,
If with a traitor's son she wed”
Then Redmond spoke, “The life of one
Might thy malignity atone
On me be flung a double guilt!
Spire Rokeby's blood, let mine be spilt!”
Wycliffe had listened to his suit,
But dead prevailed, and he was mute

- 29 And now he pours his choice of fear
In secret on Matilda's ear,
“An union formed with me and mine
Ensures the faith of Rokeby's line
Consent, and all this dread array
Like morning dream shall pass away,
Refuse, and, by my duty pressed,
I give the word—thou know'st the rest”

Matilda, still and motionless,
 With terror heard the dread address,
 Pale as the shuddered man who dies
 To hopeless love a sacrifice,
 Then wrung her hands in agony,
 And round her cast bewildered eye,
 Now on the scaffold glanced, and now
 On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow
 She veiled her face, and, with a voice
 Scarcely audible,—“I make my choice!
 Spurn but then lives!—for aught beside,
 Let Wilfrid's doom my fate decide
 He once was generous!”—As she spoke,
 Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph broke—
 “Wilfrid, where loitered ye so late?—
 Why upon Basil rest thy weight?
 Art spell bound by enchanter's wand?—
 Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded hand,
 Thank her with raptures, simple boy!
 Should tears and trembling speak thy joy?”—
 “O hush my sire! to prayer and tear
 Of mine thou hast refused thine ear,
 But now the awful hour draws on,
 When truth must speak in loftier tone”—

- 30 He took Matilda's hand —“Dear maid,
 Couldst thou so injure me,” he said,
 “Of thy poor friend so basely deem,
 As blend him with this barbarous scheme?
 Alas! my efforts, made in vain,
 Might well have saved this added pain
 But now, bear witness earth and heaven,
 That ne'er was hope to mortal given,
 So twisted with the strings of life,
 As this—to call Matilda wife!
 I bid it now for ever part,
 And with the effort bursts my heart”—
 His feeble frame was worn so low,
 With wounds, with watching, and with woe,
 That nature could no more sustain
 The agony of mental pain
 He knelt—his lip her hand had pressed,—
 Just then he felt the stern arrest,
 Lower and lower sunk his head,—
 They raised him,—but the life was fled!
 Then first alarmed, his sire and train
 Tried every aid, but tried in vain
 The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
 Had left our mortal hemisphere,
 Had sought in better world the meed
 To blameless life by Heaven decreed.

- 31 The wretched sire beheld aghast,

With Wilfrid all his projects passed,
 All turned and centred on his son,
 On Wilfrid ill—and he was gone
 “And am I childless now,” he said,
 “Childless, through that relentless mind!
 A lifetime’s arts, in vain essayed,
 Are bursting on their artist’s head!—
 Here lies my Wilfrid dead—and there
 Comes hated Mortham for his hen,
 Eager to knit in happy band
 With Rokeby’s heiness Redmond’s hand
 And shall then triumph sorr o’er all
 The schemes deep-laid to work their fall?
 No!—deeds, which prudence might not dare,
 Appal not vengeance and despair
 The murderess weeps upon his bier—
 I’ll change to real that feigned tear!
 They all shall share destruction’s shock,—
 Ho! lead the captives to the block!”—
 But ill his provost could divine
 His feelings, and forbore the sign
 “Slave! to the block!—or I, or they,
 Shall face the judgment-seat this day!”—

- 32 The outmost crowd have heard a sound,
 Like horse’s hoof on hushed ground,
 Nearer it came, and yet more near,—
 The very deaths-men pruned to lean
 ’Tis in the churchyard now—the tread
 Hath waked the dwelling of the dead!
 Fresh sod, and old sepulchral stone,
 Return the tramp in varied tone
 All eyes upon the gateway hang,
 When through the Gothic arch there sprung
 A Horseman armed at headlong speed,—
 Sable his cloak, his plume, his steed
 Fire from the flinty floor was spurned,
 The vaults unwonted clang returned!—
 One instant’s glance round he threw,
 From saddle-bow his pistol drew
 Grimly determined was his look!
 His charger with the spurs he strook
 All scattered backward as he came,
 For all knew Bertram Risingham!
 Three bounds that noble courser gave,
 The first has reached the central nave,
 The second cleared the chancel wide,
 The third,—he was at Wyckiffe’s side
 Full levelled at the Baron’s head,
 Rung the report—the bullet sped—
 And to his long account, and list,
 Without a groan and Oswald pressed!

All was so quick that it might seem
A flash of lightning, or a dream

- 33 While yet the smoke the deed conceals,
Bertram his ready charger wheels,
But floundered on the pavement floor
The steed, and down the rider bore,
And, bursting in the herdlong sway,
The futhless saddle girths gave way,
'Twas while he toiled him to be freed,
And with the rein to raise the steed,
That from unmovement's iron trance
All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at once
Sword, halbert, musket-butt, their blow
Hailed upon Bertram as he rose,
A score of pikes, with each a wound
Bore down and pinned him to the ground,
But still his struggling force he rears,
'Gainst hacking brands and stabbing spears;
Thrice from assailants shook him free,
Once gained his feet, and twice his knee
By tenfold odds oppressed at length,
Despite his struggles and his strength,
He took a hundred mortal wounds,
As mute as fox 'mongst mangling hounds:
And when he died, his parting gaze
Had more of laughter than of moan:
—They gazed, as when a lion dies,
And hunters scarcely trust their eyes,
But bend their weapons on the slain,
Lest the grim king should rouse again!—
Then blow and insult some renewed
And from the trunk the head had hewed,
But Basil's voice the deed forbade,
A mantle o'er the corpse he laid —
"Fell as he was in act and mind,
He left no bolder heart behind
Then give him, for a soldier meet,
A soldier's cloak for winding sheet" —

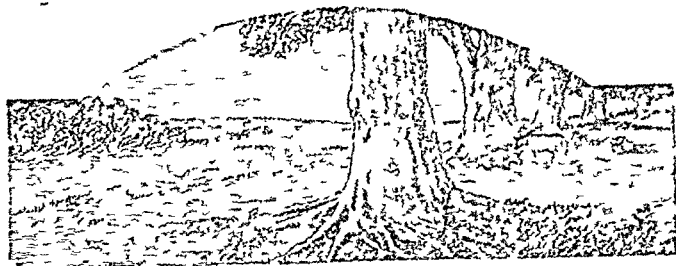
- 34 No more of death and dying pang,
No more of trump and bugle clang,
I hough through the sounding woods there come
Banner and bugle, trump and drum
Aimed with such powers as well had fled
Young Redmond at his utmost need,
And bricked with such a band of horse,
As might less ample powers enforce,
Possessed of every proof and sign
That gave an heir to Mortham's line,
And yielded to a father's arms
An image of his Edith's charms, —
Mortham is come, to hear and see

Of this strange morn the history
 What saw he?—not the church's floor,
 Cumbered with dead and stained with gore;
 What heard he?—not the clamorous crowd,
 That shout their gratulations loud,
 Redmond he saw and heard alone,
 Clasped him, and sobbed, "My son, my son!"—

- 35 This chanced upon a summer morn,
 When yellow waved the heavy corn,
 But when brown August o'er the land
 Called for the reapers' busy band,
 A gladsome sight the sylvan road
 From Eglstone to Mortham showed
 A while the hardy rustic leaves
 The task to bind and pile the sheaves,
 And maids then sickles fling aside,
 To gaze on bridegroom and on bride,
 And Childhood's wondering group draws near
 And from the gleaner's hand the ear
 Drops, while she folds them for a prayer
 And blessing on the lovely pair
 'Twas then the Maid of Rokeby gave
 Her plighted troth to Redmond brave,
 And Teesdale can remember yet
 How Fate to Virtue paid her debt,
 And, for their troubles, bide them prove
 A lengthened life of peace and love

Time and Tide had thus their sway,
 Yielding, like an April day,
 Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
 Years of joy for hours of sorrow!





THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN,

OR

THE VALE OF ST JOHN

A LOVER'S TALL—IN THREE CANTOS

An elf-queene wol I love I wis,
For in this world no woman is
Worthy to be my make in town
All other women I forsake,
And to an elf-queene I me take
By dale and cleve by down
RIT OF SIR THOMAS

First published anonymously at Edinburgh in 1813

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

In the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for the year 1809, three Fragments were inserted, written in imitation of Living Poets. It must have been apparent, that by these profusions, nothing burlesque or disrespectful to the authors was intended, but that they were offered to the public as serious, though certainly very imperfect, imitations of that style of composition by which each of the writers is supposed to be distinguished. As these exercises attracted a greater degree of attention than the author anticipated, he has been induced to complete one of them, and present it as a separate publication.

It is not in this place that an examination of the works of the master whom he has here adopted as his model, can, with propriety, be introduced, since his general acquiescence in the favourable suffrage of the public must necessarily be inferred from the attempt he has now made. He is induced, by the nature of his subject to offer a few remarks on what has been called ROMANTIC POETRY—the popularity of which has been revived in the present day, under the auspices, and by the unparalleled success, of one individual.

The original purpose of poetry is either religious or historical, or, as must frequently happen, a mixture of both. To modern readers the poems of Homer have many of the features of pure romance; but, in the estimation of his contemporaries they probably derived their chief value from their supposed historical authenticity. The same may be generally said of the poetry of all early ages. The marvels and miracles which the poet blends with his song do not exceed in number or extravagance the fragments of the historians of the same period of society; and, indeed, the difference betwixt poetry and prose, as the vehicles of historical truth, is always of late introduction. Poets, under various denominations of Bards, Scalds, Chroniclers, and so forth, are

history and individual virtue be the readier and more accessible road to general interest and attention and perhaps we may add, that it is the more useful, as well as the more accessible, inasmuch as it affords an example capable of being easily imitated.

According to the author's idea of Romantic Poetry, as distinguished from Epic, the former comprehends a fictitious narrative, framed and combined at the pleasure of the writer beginning and ending as he may judge best which neither exacts nor refuses the use of supernatural machinery which is free from the technical rules of the *Epee*, and is subject only to those which good sense good taste, and good morals, apply to every species of poetry without exception. The date may be in a remote age, or in the present the story may detail the adventures of a prince or of a peasant. In a word, the author is absolute master of his country and its inhabitants, and everything is permitted to him excepting to be heavy or prosaic, for which, free and unembarrassed as he is, he has no manner of apology. Those, it is probable, will be found the peculiarities of this species of composition and, before joining the outcry against the vitiated taste that fosters and encourages it, the justice and grounds of it ought to be made perfectly apparent. If the want of sieges and battles and great military evolutions in our poetry is complained of, let us reflect, that the campaigns and heroes of our days are perpetuated in a record that neither requires nor admits of the aid of fiction and if the complaint refers to the inferiority of our bards let us pay a just tribute to their modesty, limiting them, as it does, to subjects which, however indifferently treated, have still the interest and charm of novelty, and which thus prevents them from adding insipidity to their other more insuperable defects.

INTRODUCTION

- 1 COME, Lucy! while 'tis morning hown,
The woodland brook we needs must pass,
So, ere the sun assume his power,
We shelter in our poplar bower,
Where dew lies long upon the flower,
Though vanished from the velvet grass,
Curbing the stream, this stony ridge
May serve us for a sylvan bridge,
For here, compelled to disunite,
Round petty isles the runnels glide,
And, chafing off their puny spite,
The shallow murmurers waste their might,
Yielding to footstep free and light
A dry-shod pass from side to side
- 2 Nay, why this hesitating pause?
And, Lucy, as thy step withdraws,
Why sidelong eye the streamlet's brim?
Titrant's foot without a slip,
Like thine though timid, light, and slim,
I rom stone to stone might safely trip,
Nor risk the glow-worm clasp to dip
That binds her slipper's silken rim
Or rust thy lover's strength, nor fear
That this same stalwart arm of mine,
Which could von oak's prone trunk uprear,
Still shrivel beneath the burden derv
Of form so slender, light and fine —
So - now, the danger dried at last,
I look back and smile at perils past.

- 3 And now we reach the favourite glade
 Paled in by cypresswood cliff, and stone,
 Where never but her sounds invade,
 To break Affection's whispering tone.
 Than the deep breeze that waves the shade,
 Than the small brook let's feel the flow,
 Come! rest thee on this wonted seat,
 Mossed is the stone, the turf's green,
 A place where lovers best may meet,
 Who would not that their love be seen
 The laughs that dim the summer sky,
 Shall hide us from each lurking spy,
 That fair would spread the nuptious tale.
 How Lucy of the lolly eye,
 Noble in birth in fortunes high,
 She for whom lords and barons sigh
 Meets her poor Arthur in the aisle
- 4 How deep that blush!—how deep that sigh!
 And why does Lucy shun mine eye?—
 Is it because that crimson draws
 Its colour from some secret cause,
 Some hidden movement of the breast
 She would not that her Arthur guess'd?
 O' quicker far is lovers' ken
 Than the dull glance of common men,
 And, by strange sympathy, can spell
 The thoughts the loved one will not tell!
 And nane, in Lucy's blush, saw met
 The hues of pleasure and regret,
 Pride mingled in the sigh her voice,
 And shared with Love the crimson glow,
 Well pleased that thou art Arthur's choice
 Yet shrieve thine own is plac'd so low
 Thou turn'st thy self-confessing cheek
 As if to meet the breeze's cooling,
 Then, Lucy, hear thy tutor speak,
 For Love, too, has his hours of schooling
- 5 Too oft my anxious eye has spied
 That secret grief thou fain wouldst hide
 The pining pang of lumb'd pride—
 Too oft, when through the splendid hall
 The lord-star o' each heart and eye
 My fair one leads the glittering bairn
 Will her stolen glance on Arthur fall
 With such a blush as I such a sigh!
 Thou wouldst not yield for wealth or rank,
 The heart thy worth and beauty won,
 Nor leave me on this mossy bank,
 To meet a rival on a throne.
 Why, then, should vain repinings rise,
 That to thy lover fate denies

A nobler name, a valde doctum,
 A braver birth, a more illustrious
 Since heaven's sign, I know, for him, 'tis
 A lyre, a fiddle, and a heart?

- 6 My sword——its master must be dumb
 But, when a soldier name me, name,
 Approach, my Lucy! fearless come,
 Nor dread to hear of Arthur's shame
 My heart——and all your courtly crew,
 Of lordly rank and lofty hue,
 Is there to love and honour true,
 That boasts a pulse so warm as mine?
 They praised thy diamonds' lustrous rare——
 Matched with thine eye, I thought it fair;
 They praised the pearls that bound thy hair——
 I only saw the locks they braided,
 They talked of wealthy dower and land,
 And titles, of high birth the token——
 I thought of Lucy's heart and hand,
 Nor knew the sense of what was spoken
 And yet, if ranked in Fortune's roll,
 I might have learned their choice unwise,
 Who rate the dower above the soul,
 And Lucy's diamonds o'er her eyes

- 7 My lyre——it is an idle toy,
 That borrows accents not its own,
 Like warbler of Columbian sky,
 That sings but in a mimic tone
 Ne'er did it sound o'er sainted well,
 Nor boasts it right of Border spell,
 Its strings no feudal slogan pour,
 Its heroes draw no broad chymic,
 No shouting clans applauses raise,
 Because it sung their fathers' praise,
 On Scottish moor, or English down,
 It ne'er was graced with fair renown,
 Nor won,—best meed to minstrel true,—
 One favouring smile from fair BUCCLECH
 By one poor streamlet sounds its tone,
 And heard by one dear maid alone

- 8 But, if thou bidd'st, these tones shall tell
 Of eriant knight and damozelle,
 Of the dread knot a wizard tied,
 In punishment of maiden's pride,
 In notes of marvel and of fear,
 That best may charm romantic ear
 For Lucy loves,—like COLLINS, ill-starred name!
 Whose lyre's requital was that tardy Fame,
 Who bound no laurel round his living head,
 Should hang it o'er his monument when dead,—
 For Lucy loves to tread enchanted strand,

And thierd, like him, the maze of Fany land,
 Of golden battlements to view the gleam,
 And slumber soft by some Elysian stream
 Such llys she loves,—and, such my Lucy's choice,
 What other song can claim her poet's voice?

CANTO FIRST

- 1 WHERE is the maiden of mortal stiam,
 That may match with the Baron of Triermun?
 She must be lovely and constant and kind,
 Holy and pure and humble of mind,
 Blithe of cheer and gentle of mood,
 Couteous and generous and noble of blood—
 Lovely as the sun's first ray,
 When it breaks the clouds of an April day,
 Constant and true as the widowed dove,
 Kind as a minstrel that sings of love,
 Pure as the fountam in rocky cave,
 Where never sunbeam kissed the wave,
 Humble as maiden that loves in van,
 Holy as hermit's vesper strain,
 Gentle as breeze that but whispers and dies,
 Yet blithe as the light leaves that dance in its sighs,
 Courteous as monarch the morn he is crowned,
 Generous as spring-dews that bless the glad ground
 Noble her blood as the currents that met
 In the veins of the noblest Plantagenet—
 Such must her form be, her mood and her stiam,
 That shall match with Sir Roland of Triermun
- 2 Sir Roland de Vaux he hath laid him to sleep,
 His blood it was severed, his breathing was
 He had been picking against the Scot,
 The foray was long and the skirmish hot,
 His dinted helm and his buckler's plight
 Bore token of a stubborn fight
 All in the castle must hold them still,
 Harpers must lull him to his rest,
 With the slow soft tunes he loves the best,
 Till sleep sink down upon his breast,
 Like the dew on a summer hill
- 3 It was the dawn of an autumn day,
 The sun was struggling with frost-fog gray
 That like a silvery crape was spread
 Round Skiddaw's dun and distant head,
 And faintly gleamed each painted pane
 Of the lordly halls of Triermun,
 When that baron bold awoke
 Starting he woke, and loudly did call,
 Rousing his menials in bower and hall,
 While hastily he spoke.—

- 4 "Heaven, my minstrel ! Which of you all
Touched his harp with that dying fall,
So sweet, so soft, so faint,
It seemed an angel's whirled call
To an expiring saint !
And hearken, my merry-men ! What time or where
Did she pass, that maid with her heavenly flow,
With her look so sweet and her eyes so fair
And her graceful step and her angel air,
And the eagle plume on her dark-brown hair
That passed from my bower e'en now ?"
- 5 Answered him Richard de Brettville, he
Was chief of the baron's minstrelsy, —
"Silent, noble chieftain, we
Have sat since midnight close,
When such lulling sounds as the brooklet sings
Murmured from our melting strings,
And hushed you to repose
Had a harp note sounded here,
It had caught my watchful ear,
Although it fell as faint and shy
As bashful maiden's half-formed sigh,
When she thinks her lover near" —
Answered Philip of Fasthwaite tall,
He kept guard in the outer hall, —
"Since at eve our watch took post,
Not a foot has thy portil crossed,
Else had I heard the steps, though low
And light they fell, as when earth receives,
In morn of frost, the withered leaves,
That drop when no winds blow" —
- 6 "Then come thou hither, Henry, my page,
Whom I saved from the sack of Hemutage,
When that dark castle, tower, and spire,
Rose to the skies a pile of fire,
And reddened all the Nine stone Hill,
And the shrouds of death, that wildly broke
Through devouring flame and smothering smoke
Made the warrior's heart-blood chill !
The truest thou of all my train,
My fleetest courser thou must rein,
And ride to Lyulph's tower,
And from the baron of Treimain
Greet well that sage of power
He is sprung from Druid sires,
And British birds that tuned their lyres
To Arthur's and Pendragon's praise,
And his who sleeps at Dunmuhaise,
Gifted like his gifted race,
He the characters can trace,
Graven deep in elder time

Upon Helvellyn's cliffs sublime,
 Sign and sigil well doth he know,
 And can bode of weal and woe,
 Of kingdoms' fall, and fate of wars,
 From mystic dreams and course of stars.
 He shall tell me if middle earth
 To that enchanting shape gave birth,
 Or if 'twas but an airy thing,
 Such as fantastic slumbers bring,
 Framed from the rainbow's varying dyes,
 Or fading tints of western skies
 For, by the blessed rood I swear,
 If that fair form breathe vital air,
 No other maiden by my side
 Shall ever rest De Vaux's bride!"—

7 The faithful page he mounts his steed,
 And soon he crossed green Irthing's mead,
 Dashed o'er Kirkoswald's verdant plain,
 And Eden barred his course in vain
 He passed red Penrith's Table Round,
 For seats of chivalry renowned,
 Left Maryburgh's mound and stones of power,
 By Druids raised in magic hour,
 And traced the Eamont's winding way,
 Till Ulfo's lake beneath him lay

8 Onwards he rode, the pathway still
 Winding betwixt the lake and hill,
 Till on the fragment of a rock,
 Struck from its base by lightning shock,
 He saw the hoary sage
 The silver moss and lichen twined,
 With fern and deer-hair checked and lined,
 A cushion fit for age,
 And o'er him shook the aspen-tree,
 A restless rustling canopy
 Then sprung young Henry from his selle,
 And greeted Ljolph grave,
 And then his master's tale did tell,
 And then for counsel crave
 The Man of Yeus mused long and deep,
 Of time's lost treasures tal'ing keep,
 And then, as rousing from a sleep,
 His solemn answer gave

9 "That maid is born of middle earth,
 And may of man be won,
 Though there have glided since her birth
 Five hundred years and one
 But where's the knight in all the north
 That dare the adventure follow forth
 So perilous to knightly worth,
 In the Valley of St John?

Listen, youth, to what I tell,
 And bind it on thy memory well,
 Nor muse that I come once the rhyme
 Far distant 'mid the wheels of time
 The mystic tale, by hard and long,
 Is handed down from Merlin's tongue

LAVINIA'S TALE

10 "KING ARTHUR has ridden from many a while
 When Pentecost was o'er;
 He journeyed like errant knight the while,
 And sweetly the summer sun did smile
 On mountain, moor, and moor
 Above his solitary track
 Rose Glaramara's ridgy back,
 Amid whose yawning gulfs the sun
 Cast umbered radiance red and dun,
 Though never sunbeam could discern
 The surface of that sable tarn,
 In whose black mirror you may spy
 The stars, while noontide lights the sky,
 The gallant king he skirted still
 The margin of that mighty hill
 Rock-upon-rocks incumbent hang,
 And torrents, down the gullies flung,
 Joined the rude river that brawled on,
 Recoiling now from crag and stone,
 Now diving deep from hummocky fen,
 And raving down its darksome glen
 The monarch judged this desert wild,
 With such romantic ruin piled,
 Was theatre by Nature's hand
 For feat of high achievement planned

"O rather he chose, that monarch bold,
 On venturesome quest to ride,
 In plate and mail, by wood and wold,
 Than, with crumme trapped and cloth of gold,
 In princely bower to bide,
 The bursting crash of a foeman's spear,
 As it shivered against his mail,
 Was merrier music to his ear
 Than countess's whispered tale
 And the clash of Caliburn more dear,
 When on the hostile casque it rung
 Than all the lays
 To their monarch's praise
 That the harpers of Reged sung
 He loved better to rest by wood or river,
 Than in bower of his bride, dame Guenevere
 For he left that lady so lovely of cheer,
 To follow adventures of danger and fear,

And the frank-hearted monarch full little did wot
That she smiled, in his absence, on brave Lancelot

- 2 "He rode, till over down and dell
The shade more broad and deeper fell,
And though round the mountain's head
Flowed streams of purple, gold, and red,
Dark at the base, unblest by beam,
Frowned the black rocks, and roared the stream
With toil the king his way pursued
By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood,
Till on his course obliquely shone
The narrow valley of SAINT JOHN,
Down sloping to the western sky,
Where lingering sunbeams love to lie
Right glad to feel those beams again,
The king drew up his charger's rein;
With gauntlet raised he screened his sight,
As dazzled with the level light,
And, from beneath his glove of mail,
Scanned at his ease the lovely vale,
While 'gainst the sun his armour bright
Gleamed ruddy like the beacon's light.

- 13 "Piled in by many a lofty hill,
The narrow dale lay smooth and still,
And, down its verdant bosom led,
A winding brooklet found its bed
But, midmost of the vale, a mound
Arose, with airy turrets crowned,
Buttress, and rampire's circling bound,
And mighty keep and tower,
Seemed some primeval giant's hand
The castle's massive walls had planned,
A ponderous bulwark, to withstand
Ambitious Nimrod's power
Above the moated entrance slung,
The balanced drawbridge trembling hung,
As jealous of a foe,
Wicket of oak, as iron hard,
With iron studded clenched, and barred,
And pronged portcullis, joined to guard
The gloomy pass below
But the gray walls no banners crowned,
Upon the watch-tower's airy round
No warder stood his horn to sound,
No guard beside the bridge was found,
And, where the Gothic gateway frowned
Glanced neither bill nor bow.
- 14 "Beneath the castle's gloomy pride,
In ample round did Arthur ride
Three times; nor living thing he spied,
Nor heard a living sound."

Save that, awakening from her dream,
 The outlet now began to scream,
 In concert with the rushing stream,
 That washed the battled mound
 He lighted from his goblin stand,
 And he left him to gaze on land and reard,
 And slowly he climbed the narrow way,
 That reached the entrance grim and gray,
 And he stood the outward arch below,
 And his bugle-horn prepared to blow,
 In summons blithe and bold,
 Deeming to rouse from iron sleep
 The guardian of this dismal keep,
 Which well he guessed the hold
 Of wizard stern, or goblin grim
 Or pagan of gigantic limb,
 The tyrant of the wold

- 15 "The ivory bugle's golden tip
 Twice touched the monarch's manly lip,
 And twice his hand withdrew.
 Think not but Arthur's heart was good !
 His shield was crossed by the blessed rood,
 Had a pagan host before him stood,
 He had charged them through and through.
 Yet the silence of that mute place
 Sunk on his heart, and he paused a space
 Ere yet his horn he blew
 But, instant as its clamour rung,
 The castle gate was open flung,
 Portcullis rose with crashing groan
 Tull harshly up its groove of stone,
 The balance-beams obeyed the blast,
 And down the trembling draw bridge cast
 The vaulted arch before him lay,
 With nought to bar the gloomy way,
 And onward Arthur preed, with hand
 On Caliburn's resistless brand
- 16 "A hundred torches, flashing bright,
 Dispelled at once the gloomy night
 That loomed along the walls,
 And showed the king's astonished sight
 The inmates of the halls
 Nor wizard stern, nor goblin grim,
 Nor giant huge of form and limb,
 Nor herthen knight, was there,
 But the cressets, which odours flung aloft,
 Showed, by their yellow light and soft,
 A band of damsels fair !
 Onward they came, like summer wave
 That dances to the shore,
 A hundred voices welcome gave

And welcome o'er and o'er !
 A hundred lovely hands assail
 The bucklers of the monarch's mail,
 And busy laboured to unhasp
 Rivet of steel and iron clasp,
 One wrapped him in a mantle fair,
 And one flung odours on his hair,
 His short curled ringlets one smoothed down,
 One wreathed them with a myrtle crown
 A bride upon her wedding-day
 Was tended ne'er by troop so gay

- 17 "Loud laughed they all,—the king, in vain,
 With questions tasked the giddy train,
 Let him entreat, or crave, or call
 'Twas one reply,—loud laughed they all
 Then o'er him mimic chains they fling,
 Framed of the fairest flowers of spring
 While some their gentle force unite,
 Onward to drag the wondering knight,
 Some, bolder, urge his pace with blows,
 Dealt with the lily or the rose
 Behind him were in triumph borne
 The warlike arms he late had worn
 Four of the train combined to rear
 The terrors of Tintagel's spear,
 Two, laughing at their lack of strength,
 Dragged Caliburn in cumbious length,
 One, while she sped a martial stride,
 Placed on her brows the helmet's pride,
 Then screamed, 'twixt laughter and surprise,
 To feel its depth overwhelm her eyes
 With revel-shout, and triumph-song,
 Thus gaily marched the giddy throng

- 18 "Through many a gallery and hall
 They led, I ween, their royal thrall
 At length, beneath a fair arcade
 Their march and song at once they stayed
 The eldest maiden of the band,
 (The lovely maid was scarce eighteen,)
 Raised, with imposing air, her hand,
 And reverent silence did command,
 On entrance of their Queen,
 And they were mute—But as a glance
 They steal on Arthur's countenance
 Bewildered with surprise,
 Their smothered mirth again 'gan speak,
 In archly dimpled chin and cheek,
 And laughter-lighted eyes

- 19 "The attributes of these high days
 Now only live in minstrel-lays,
 For Nature, now exhausted, still

Was then profuse of good and ill
 Strength was gigantic, valour high,
 And wisdom soared beyond the sky,
 And beauty had such matchless beam
 As lights not now a lover's dream
 Yet, e'en in that romantic age,

Ne'er were such charms by mortal seen
 As Arthur's dazzled eye engage,
 When forth on that enchanted stage,
 With glittering train of maid and page,

Advanced the castle's Queen
 While up the hall she slowly passed,
 Her dark eye on the king she cast,
 That flashed expression strong,
 The longer dwelt that lingering look,
 Her cheek the livelier colour took,
 And scarce the shame-faced king could brook

The gaze that lasted long
 A sage, who had that look espied,
 Where kindling passion strove with pride,
 Had whispered, 'Prince, beware'
 From the chafed tiger rend the prey,
 Rush on the lion when at bay,
 But the fell dragon's blighted way,
 But shun that lovely snare!

- 20 "At once, that inward strife suppressed,
 The dame approached her wailike guest,
 With greeting in that fair degree
 Where female pride and courtesy
 Are blended with such passing art
 As awes at once and charms the heart
 A courtly welcome first she gave,
 Then of his goodness 'gan to crave
 Construction fair and true
 Of her light maidens' idle mirth,
 Who drew from lonely glens their birth,
 Nor knew to pry to stranger worth
 And dignity their due,
 And then she prayed that he would rest
 That might her castle's honoured guest
 The monarch meetly thanks expressed,
 The banquet rose at her behest,
 With lay and tale, and laugh and jest,
 Apiece the evening flew

- 21 "The lady sat the monarch by,
 Now in her turn abashed and shy,
 And with indifference seemed to hear
 The toys he whispered in her ear
 Her bearing modest was and fair,
 Yet shadows of constraint were there,
 That showed an over cautious care

Some inward thought to hide ;
 Oft did she pause in full reply,
 And oft cast down her large dark eye,
 Oft checked the soft voluptuous sigh,
 That heaved her bosom's pride
 Slight symptoms these, but shepherds know
 How hot the mid-day sun shall glow
 From the mist of morning sky ;
 And so the wily monarch guessed
 That this assumed restraint expressed
 More ardent passions in the breast
 Than ventured to the eye
 Closer he pressed, while beakers rang,
 While maidens laughed and minstrels sang,
 Still closer to her ear—
 But why pursue the common tale?
 Or wherefore show how knights prevail
 When ladies dare to hear?
 Or wherefore trace, from what slight cause
 Its source one tyrant passion draws
 Till, mastering all within,
 Where lives the man that has not tried,
 How mirth can into folly glide
 And folly into sin !”

CANTO SECOND.

LUCIFER'S TALK (*continued*)

1. “ANOTHER day, another day,
 And yet another glides away !
 The Saxon stern, the pygmy Dane,
 Maraud on Britain's shores again
 Arthur, of Christendom the flower,
 Lies loitering in a lady's bower,
 The horn, that foemen wont to fear,
 Sounds but to wake the Cumbrian deer,
 And Caliburn, the British pride,
 Hangs useless by a lover's side
- 2 “Another day, another day,
 And yet another, glides away !
 Heroic plans in pleasure drowned,
 He thinks not of the Table Round,
 In lawless love dissolved his life,
 He thinks not of his beauteous wife ;
 Better he loves to snatch a flower
 From bosom of his paramour,
 Than from a Saxon knight to wrest
 The honours of his heathen crest,
 Better to wreath, 'mid tresses blown,
 The heron's plume her hawk struck down,
 Than o'er the altar give to flow
 The banners of a paynim foe.

Thus, week by week, and day by day,
His life inglorious glides away,
But she, that soothes his dream, with fear
Benolds his hour of wakening near

- 3 "Much force have mortal charms to stay
Our pace in Virtue's toilsome way,
But Guendolen's might far outshine
Each maid of merely mortal line
Her mother was of human birth,
Her sire a Gnome of the earth,
In days of old deemed to preside
O'er lovers' wiles and beauty's pride,
By youths and virgins worshipped long,
With festive dance and choral song,
Till, when the cross to Britain came
On heathen altars died the flame
Now, deep in Wastdale's solitude,
The downfall of his rights he rued,
And, born of his resentment heir,
He trained to guile that lady fair,
To sink in slothful sin and shame
The champions of the Christian name
Well skilled to keep vain thoughts alive
And all to promise, nought to give,
The timid youth had hope in store,
The bold and pressing gained no more
As wildered children leave their home,
After the rainbow's rich to roam,
Her lovers baited fair esteem,
Faith, fame, and honour, for a dream

- 4 "Her sire's soft arts the soul to tame
She practised thus—till Arthur came,
Then, frail humanity had part,
And all the mother claimed her heart
Forgot each rule her father gave,
Sunk from a princess to a slave,
Too late must Guendolen deplore,
He, that has all, can hope no more !
Now must she see her lover strain,
At every turn, her feeble chain,
Watch, to new-bind each knot, and shrink
To view each fast-decaying link
Art she invokes to Nature's aid,
Her vest to zone, her locks to braid,
Each varied pleasure heard her call,
The feast, the tourney, and the ball
Her storied lore she next applies,
Taxing her mind to aid her eyes,
Now more than mortal wise, and then
In female softness sunk again,
Now, raptured, with each wish complying,

With feigned reluctance now denying,
 Each chain she varied, to retain
 A varying heart—and all in vain !

- 5 “ Thus in the garden’s narrow bound,
 Flanked by some castle’s Gothic round,
 Fain would the artist’s skill provide,
 The limits of his realm to hide
 The walks in labyrinths he twines,
 Shade after shade with skill combines,
 With many a varied flowery knot,
 And copse and arbour decks the spot,
 Tempting the hasty foot to stay,
 And linger on the lovely way—
 Vain art ! vain hope ! ’tis fruitless all !
 At length we reach the bounding wall,
 And, sick of flower and trim-dressed tree,
 Long for rough glades and forest free
- 6 “ Three summer months had scantily flown,
 When Arthur, in embarrassed tone,
 Spoke of his liege men and his throne,
 Said, all too long had been his stay,
 And duties, which a monarch sway,
 Duties, unknown to humbler men,
 Must tear her knight from Guendolen —
 She listened silently the while,
 Her mood expressed in bitter smile,
 Beneath her eye must Arthur quail,
 And oft resume the unfinished tale,
 Confessing, by his downcast eye,
 The wrong he sought to justify
 He ceased A moment mute she gazed,
 And then her looks to heaven she raised ;
 One palm her temples veiled, to hide
 The tear that sprung in spite of pride,
 The other for an instant pressed
 The foldings of her silken vest !
7. “ At her reproachful sign and look,
 The hint the monarch’s conscience took,
 Eager he spoke—‘ No, lady, no !
 Deem not of British Arthur so,
 Nor think he can deserter prove
 To the dear pledge of mutual love !
 I swear by sceptre and by sword,
 As belted knight and Britain’s lord,
 That, if a boy shall claim my care,
 That boy is born a kingdom’s heir ;
 But, if a maiden Fate allows,
 To choose that maid a fitting spouse,
 A summer-day in lists shall strive
 My knights,—the bravest knights alive,—
 And he, the best and bravest tried,

Shall Arthur's daughter claim for bride'—
 He spoke, with voice resolved and high—
 The lady deigned him not reply

- 8 "At dawn of morn, ere on the brake
 His matins did a warbler make,
 Or stirred his wing to brush away—
 A single dew-drop from the spray,
 Lie yet a sunbeam, through the mist,
 The castle-battlements had kissed,
 The gates revolve, the drawbridge falls,
 And Arthur sallies from the walls
 Doffed his soft garb of Persia's loom,
 And steel from spur to helmet-plume,
 His Libyan steed full proudly trode,
 And joyful neighed beneath his lord.
 The monarch gave a passing sigh
 To penitence and pleasures by,
 When, lo! to his astonished ken
 Appeared the form of Guendolen
- 9 "Beyond the outmost wall she stood,
 Attired like huntress of the wood—
 Sandalled her feet, her ankles bare,
 And eagle-plumage decked her hair,
 Firm was her look, her bearing bold,
 And in her hand a cup of gold
 'Thou goest!' she said, 'and ne'er again
 Must we two meet, in joy or pain
 Full fain would I this hour delay,
 Though weak the wish—yet, wilt thou stay?
 No! thou look'st forward—Still attend,—
 Part we like lover and like friend'—
 She raised the cup—'Not thus the juice
 The sluggish vices of earth produce,
 Pledge we, at parting, in the draught
 Which Genu love!'—she said, and quaffed,
 And strange unwonted lustres fly
 From her flushed cheek and sparkling eye.
- 10 "The courteous monarch bent him low,
 And, stooping down from saddlebow,
 Lifted the cup, in act to drink
 A drop escaped the goblet's brink—
 Intense as liquid fire from hell,
 Upon the charger's neck it fell
 Screaming with agony and fright,
 He bolted twenty feet upright—
 —The peasant still can show the dint,
 Where his hoofs lighted on the flint
 From Arthur's hand the goblet flew,
 Scattering a shower of fiery dew,
 That burned and blighted where it fell!
 The frantic steed rushed up the dell,

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMALIN.

As whistles from the bow the reed;
Nor bit nor rein could check his speed
Until he gained the hill,
Then breath and sinew failed apace,
And, reeling from the desperate race,
He stood exhausted, still
The monarch, breathless and amazed,
Back on the fatal castle gazed——
Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky;
But, on the spot where once they frowned,
The lonely streamlet brawled around
A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
Fragments of rock and rifted stone
Musing on this strange hap the while,
The king wends back to fair Carlisle;
And cares, that cumber royal sway,
Wore memory of the past away

1 "Full fifteen years, and more, were sped,
Each brought new wreaths for Arthur's head
Twelve bloody fields, with glory fought,
The Saxons to subjection brought,
Rython, the mighty giant, slain
By his good brand, relieved Bretagne,
The Pictish Gillamore in fight,
And Roman Lucius, owned his might,
And wide was through the world renowned
The glories of his Table Round
Each knight, who sought adventurous fame,
To the bold court of Britain came,
And all who suffered causeless wrong,
From tyrant proud, or fautor strong,
Sought Arthur's presence to complain,
Nor there for aid implored in vain.

2 "For this the king, with pomp and pride,
Held solemn court at Whitsuntide,
And summoned prince and peer,
All who owed homage for their land,
Or who craved knighthood from his hand,
Or who had succour to demand,
To come from far and near
At such high tide, were glee and game
Mingled with feats of martial fame,
For many a stranger champion came
In lists to break a spear,
And not a knight of Arthur's host,
Save that he trode some foreign coast,
But at this feast of Pentecost
Before him must appeal —
Ah, Minstrels! when the Table Round
Arose, with all its warriors crowned,

THE BRIDAL OF FRIERMALIN

There was a theme for bards to sound
 In triumph to their string!
 Five hundred years are pasted and gone,
 But Time shall draw his dying gloom,
 Ere he behold the British throne
 Begirt with such a ring!

- 13 The heralds named the appointed spot,
 As Cierlon or Cuncloot,
 On Carlisle fair and free
 At Penrith, now, the feast was set,
 And in fair Eamont's vale were met
 The flower of chivalry
 There Galhad sat with manly grace,
 Yet maiden meekness in his face,
 There Morolt of the iron mace,
 And love-lorn Tristrem there;
 And Dinadam with lively glance,
 And Lival with the fairy lance,
 And Mordred with his look askance,
 Brunor and Bevidere
 Why should I tell of numbers more?
 Sir Cuy, Sir Banier, and Sir Bore,
 Sir Carodac the keen,
 The gentle Gawain's courteous lore,
 Hector de Mares and Pellinore,
 And Lancelot, that evermore
 Looked stolen-wise on the Queen
- 14 "When wine and mirth did most abound,
 And harpers played their blithest round,
 A shrilly trumpet shook the ground,
 And marshals cleared the ring,
 A Maiden, on a palfrey white,
 Heading a band of damsels bright,
 Paced through the circle, to alight
 And kneel before the king
 Arthur, with strong emotion, saw
 Her graceful boldness checked by awe,
 Her dress like huntress of the wold,
 Her bow and baldric trapped with gold,
 Her sandalled feet, her ankles bare,
 And the eagle-plume that decked her hair
 Graceful her veil she backwards flung—
 The King, as from his seat he sprung,
 Almost cried, 'Guendolen!'
 But 'twas a face more frank and wild,
 Betwixt the woman and the child,
 Where less of magic beauty smiled
 Than of the race of men,
 And in the forehead's haughty grace,
 The lines of Britain's royal race,
 Pendragon's you might ken

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN:

15 "Faltering, yet gracefully, she said—
"Great Prince! behold an orphan maid,
In her departed mother's name,
A father's vowed protection claim!
The vow was sworn in desert lone,
In the deep valley of Saint John,—
At once the King the suppliant raised,
And kissed her brow, her beauty praised;
His vow, he said, should well be kept,
Ere in the sea the sun was dipped
Then, conscious, glanced upon his queen.
But she, unruffled at the scene,
Of human frailty construed mild,
Looked upon Lancelot and smiled

16 "Up! up! each knight of gallant crest!
Take buckler, spear, and brand!
He that to-day shall bear him best,
Shall win my Gyneth's hand.
And Arthur's daughter, when a bride,
Shall bring a noble dower,
Both fair Strath-Clyde and Reged wide,
And Carlisle town and tower,—
Then might you hear each valiant knight,
To page and squire that cried,
"Bring my armour bright, and my courser swift!
'Tis not each day that a warrior's might
May win a royal bride"—
Then cloaks and caps of maintenance
In haste aside they flung,
The helmets glance, and gleams the lance
And the steel-weaved hauberk's ring
Small care had they of their peaceful array,
They might gather it that wolde,
For brake and bramble glittered gay
With pearls and cloth of gold

17 "Within trumpet-sound of the Table Round
Were fifty champions free,
And they all arise to fight that prize,—
They all arise but three
Nor love's fond troth, nor wedlock's oath.
One gallant could withhold,
For priests will allow of a broken vow,
For penance or for gold
But sigh and glance from ladies bright
Among the troop were thrown,
To plead men right and true-love plight
And plum of honour flown
The knights they kissed them so fast,
With buckling spur and belt,
That sign and look, by ladies cast,
Were neither seen nor felt.

From pleading, or upbraiding place,
 Each passant turn aside,
 And only this sight, 'Tis in all my life,
 A queen become my bride;
 She has for strength, Oge's red knight wife,
 And Carl's to set us to the strife,
 She is the loyal friend, the true,
 That ever loved a crown;
 So in haste their carriage they let take,
 And strike their vices dead.

- 18 "The champions, armed in their best,
 Have thrown, ed into the list,
 And but three I my life of Arthur's quest
 Are from the tournament
 And still these lovers' fame survives,
 For faith so constant shows,—
 There are two who loved their neighbours' wives,
 And one who loved his own
 The first was Lancelot de Lac,
 The second Tristram bold,
 The third was valiant Caradoc,
 Who won the cup of gold.
 What time, of all King Arthur's crew,
 (Thereof came just and true),
 He, as the mate of Lady Ine
 Alone the cup could quaff
 Though envy's tongue would fain have said,
 That, but for very shame,
 Sir Caradoc to fight that prize,
 Had given both cup and drive,
 Yet, since but one of that fair court
 Was true to wedlock's shrine,
 Brand him who will with base report,—
 He shall be free from mine

- 19 "Now caroled the steeds in air,
 Now plumes and pennons wanted fur,
 As all around the lists so wide
 In pinoply the champions ride.
 King Arthur saw, with startled eye,
 The flower of chivalry march by,
 The bulwark of the Christian creed,
 The kingdom's shield in hour of need
 Too late he thought him of the woe
 Might from their civil conflict flow,
 I or well he knew they would not part
 Till cold was many a gallant heart
 His hasty vow he gan to rue,
 And Gyneth then apart he drew,
 To her his leading-staff resigned,
 But added caution grave and kind
 20 "Thou seest, my child, as promise-bound,

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMALN.

I bid the trump for tounney sound
Take thou my warder, as the queen
And umpire of the martial scene,
But mark thou this — as Beauty bright
Is polar star to valiant knight,
As at her word his sword he draws,
His fanest guerdon her applause,
So gentle maid should never ask
Of knighthood vain and dangerous task,
And Beauty's eyes should ever be
Like the twin stars that soothe the sea,
And Beauty's breath should whisper peace,
And bid the storm of battle cease.
I tell thee this, lest all too far
These knights urge tounney into war
Blithe at the trumpet let them go,
And fairly counter blow for blow, —
No striplings these, who succour need
For a razed helm or falling steed
But, Gyneth, when the strife grows warm,
And threatens death or deadly harm,
Thy sue entreats, thy king commands,
Thou drop the warder from thy hands
Trust thou thy father with thy fate,
Doubt not he choose thee fitting mate,
Nor be it sad, through Gyneth's pride
A rose of Arthur's chaplet died' —

21 "A proud and discontented glow
O'ershadowed Gyneth's brow of snow;
She put the warder by —
'Reserve thy boon, my liege,' she said,
'Thus chaffered down and limited,
Debased and narrowed, for a maid
Of less degree than I
No petty chief but holds his heir
At a more honoured price and rare
Than Britain's king holds me!
Although the sun-burned maid, for dower,
Has but her father's rugged tower,
His barren hill and lea.
King Arthur swore, "by crown and sword,
As belted knight and Britain's lord,
That a whole summer's day should strive
His knights, the bravest knights alive!"
Recall thine oath, and to her glen,
Poor Gyneth can return again,
Not on thy daughter will the stain,
That soils thy sword and crown, remain.
But think not she will e'er be blide
Save to the bravest, proved and tried,
Fendrigon's daughter will not fear

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMALIN.

And hoise and man, to ground there came
Knights who shall rise no more !
Gone was the pride the war that graced,
Gay shields were cleft, and crests defaced,
And steel coats riven, and helms unbraced,
And pennons streamed with gore
Gone, too, were fence and fair array,
And desperate strength made deadly way
At random through the bloody fray,
And blows were dealt with headlong sway,
Unheeding where they fell,
And now the trumpet's clamours seem
Like the shrill sea-bird's wailing scream,
Heard o'er the whirlpool's gulping stream,
The sinking seaman's knell !

25 "Seemed in this dismal hour, that Fate
Would Camlan's ruin antedate
And spare dark Mordred's crime .

Already gasping on the ground,
Lie twenty of the Table Round,
Of chivalry the prime

Aithur, in anguish, tore away
From head and beard his tresses gray, -
And she, proud Gyneth, felt dismay,

And quaked with ruth and fear ;
But still she deemed her mother's shade
Hung o'er the tumult, and forbade

The sign that had the slaughter stayed,
And chid the rising ten

Then Brunor, Trulas, Mador, fell,
Heliast the White, and Lionel,

And many a champion more ,
Rochemont and Dinadam are down,
And Ferrand of the Forest Brown

Lies gasping in his gore
Vanoc by mighty Morolt pressed,
Even to the confines of the list,
Young Vanoc of the beardless face,
(Fame spoke the youth of Merlin's race,)
O'erpowered at Gyneth's footstool bled,
His heart's blood dyed her sandals red

But then the sky was overcast,
Then howled it once a whirlwind's blast,
And, rent by sudden throes,

-Yawned in mid lists the quaking earth,
And from the gulf, tremendous birth !
The form of Merlin rose

26 "Sternly the wizard prophet eyed
The dreary lists with slaughter dyed
And sternly raised his hand -
'Madmen !' he said, 'your strife forbear !

And thou, fair cause of mischief, hear
 The doom thy fates demand !
 Long shall close in stony sleep
 Eyes for ruth that would not weep,
 Iron lethaigy shall seal
 Heart that pity scorned to feel
 Yet, because thy mother's wit
 Warped thine unsuspecting heart,
 And for love of Arthur's race,
 Punishment is blent with grace
 Thou shalt bear thy penance lone,
 In the Valley of Saint John,
 And this weird shall overtake thee,—
 Sleep, until a knight shall wake thee,
 For feats of arms as far renowned
 As warrior of the Table Round
 Long endurance of thy slumber
 Well may teach the world to number
 All their woes from Gyneth's pride,
 When the Red Cross champions died.~

27 "As Merlin speaks, on Gyneth's eye
 Slumber's load begins to lie,
 Fear and Anger vainly strive
 Still to keep its light alive
 Twice, with effort and with pause,
 O'er her brow her hand she draws,
 Twice her strength in vain she tries,
 From the fatal chair to rise,
 Merlin's magic doom is spoken,
 Vanoc's death must now be wroken.
 Slow the dark-fringed eyelids fall,
 Curtaining each azure ball,
 Slowly as on summer eves
 Violets fold their dusky leaves
 The weighty baton of command
 Now bears down her sinking hand,
 On her shoulder droops her head,
 Net of pearl and golden thread,
 Bursting, gave her locks to flow
 O'er her arm and breast of snow
 And so lovely seemed she there,
 Spell-bound in her ivory chair,
 That her angry sire, repenting,
 Craved stern Merlin for relenting,
 And the champions, for her sake,
 Would again the contest wake,
 Till, in necromantic night,
 Gyneth vanished from their sight.

28 "Still she bears her weird alone,
 In the Valley of Saint John,
 And her semblance oft will seem,

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAR:

Mingling in a champion's dream,
Of her weary lot to plan,
And gave his aid to burst her chain,
While her wondrous tale was new,
Warriors to her rescue drew,
East and west, and south and north,
From the Liffy, Thames, and Forth
Most have sought in vain the glen,
Tower nor castle could they ken,
Not at every time or tide,
Nor by every eye descried
Fast and vigil must be borne,
Many a night in watching worn,
Ere an eye of mortal powers
Can discern those magic towers
Of the persevering few,
Some from hopeless task withdrew,
When they read the dismal threat
Graved upon the gloomy gate
Few have braved the yawning door,
And those few returned no more
In the lapse of time forgot,
Well-nigh lost is Gyneth's lot,
Sound her sleep as in the tomb,
Till wakened by the trump of doom.

END OF LULLIE'S TALE.

Here pause, my tale, for all too soon,
My Lucy, comes the hour of noon.
Already from thy lofty dome
Its courtly inmates 'gin to roam,
And each, to kill the goodly day
That God has granted them, his way
Of lazy sauntering has sought,
Lordlings and wifings not a few,
Incapable of doing aught,
Yet ill at ease with nought to do
Here is no longer place for me,
For, Lucy, thou wouldst blush to see
Some phantom, fashionably thin,
With limb of lath and kerchiefed chin,
And lounging gape, or sneering grin,
Steal sudden on our privacy.
And how should I, so humbly born,
Endure the graceful spectre's scorn?
Faith! ill, I fear, while conjuring wand
Of English oak is hard at hand

2 Or grant the hour be all too soon
For Hessian boot and pantaloon,
And grant the lounge seldom strays
Beyond the smooth and grained mure,

Laud we the gods, that Fashion's train
 Holds hearts of more adventurous strain
 Artists are here, who scorn to trace
 Their rules from Nature's boundless grace,
 But then right paramount assert
 To limit her by pedant art,
 Dimming whate'er of vast and fan
 Exceeds a canvas three feet square
 This thicket, for their *gumption* fit,
 May furnish such a happy bit
 Bards, too, are here, wont to recite
 Their own sweet lays by waven light,
 Half in the silver's tingle drowned,
 While the chaise-café glides round,
 And such may hither secret stow,
 To labour an extempore
 Or sportsman, with his boisterous holla,
 May here his wiser sparrow follow,
 Or stage-struck Juliet may presume
 To choose this bower for tiring-room,
 And we alike must shun regard,
 From punter, player, sportsman, bard
 Insects that skim in Fashion's sky,
 Wasp, blue bottle, or butterfly,
 Lucy, have all charms for us,
 For all can hum and all can buzz

- 3 But oh, my Lucy, say how long
 We still must dread this trifling throng,
 And stoop to hide, with coward art
 The genuine feelings of the heart!
 No parents thine, whose just command
 Should rule their child's obedient hand,
 Thy guardians, with contending voice,
 Press each his individual choice
 And which is Lucy's?—Can it be
 That puny sop, trimmed cap and pee,
 Who loves in the saloon to show
 The arms that never knew a foe,
 Whose sabre trails along the ground
 Whose legs and shapeless boots are drowned;
 A new Achilles, sure,—the steel
 Led from his breast to fence his heel,
 One, for the simple manly grace
 That wont to deck our martial race,
 Who comes in foreign trashery
 Of tinkling chain and spur,
 A walling haberdashery,
 Of feathers lace, and fur
 In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
 No milliner of modern days

4 Or is he, the wordy youth,

THE BRIDAL OF IRIERMAIN.

So early trained for statesman's part,
 Who talks of honour, faith, and truth,
 As themes that he has got by heart,
 Whose ethics Chesterfield can teach,
 Whose logic is from Single-speech,
 Who scorns the merriest thought to vent,
 Save in the phrase of parliament,
 Who, in a tale of cat and mouse,
 Calls "order," and "divides the house,"
 Who 'craves permission to reply,'
 Whose "noble friend is in his eye,"
 Whose loving tender some have reckoned
 A *motion* you should gladly *second*?

5 What, neither? Can there be a third,
 To such resistless swans preferred?—
 O why, my Lucy, turn aside,
 With that quick glance of injured pride!
 Forgive me, love, I cannot bear
 That altered and resentful air
 Were all the wealth of Russel mine,
 And all the rank of Howard's line,
 All would I give for leave to dry
 That dewdrop trembling in thine eye.
 Think not I fear such fops can wilt
 From Lucy more than careless smile,
 But yet if wealth and high degree
 Give gilded counters currency,
 Must I not fear, when rank and birth
 Stamp the pure ore of genuine worth?
 Nobles there are, whose martial fires
 Rival the fame that raised their sires,
 And patriots, skilled through storms of fate
 To guide and guard the reeling state
 Such, such there are—if such should come,
 Arthur must tremble and be dumb,
 Self-exiled seek some distant shore,
 And mourn till life and grief are o'er.

6 What sight, what signal of alarm,
 That Lucy clings to Arthur's arm?
 Or is it, that the rugged way
 Makes Beauty learn on lover's stay?
 Oh, no! for on the vale and brake,
 Not sight nor sounds of danger wake,
 And this trim swaid of velvet green
 Were carpet for the fury queen
 That pressure slight was but to tell
 That Lucy loves her Arthur well,
 And fain would banish from his mind
 Suspicious fear and doubt unkind.

7 But wouldst thou bid the demons fly
 Like mist before the dawning sky,

There is but one resistless spell—
 Say, wilt thou guess, or must I tell?
 Twere hard to name, in minstrel phrase,
 A handrulet and four blood-bays
 But birds agree this wizard band
 Can but be bound in Northern Land
 'Tis there—nay, draw not back thy hand—
 'Tis there this slender finger round
 Must golden amulet be bound,
 Which, blessed with many a holy prayer,
 Can change to rapture lovers' care,
 And doubt and jealousy shall die
 And fears give place to ecstasy

- 8 Now, trust me, Lucy, all too long
 Has been thy lover's tale and song
 O why so silent, love, I pray?
 Have I not spoke the livelong day?
 And will not Lucy deign to say
 One word her friend to bless?
 I ask but one—a simple sound,
 Within three little letters bound,
 O let the word be YES!

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

1. LONG loved, long wooed, and lately won,
 My life's best hope, and now mine own!
 Doth not this rude and Alpine glen
 Recall our favourite haunts again?
 A wild resemblance we can trace,
 Though rest of every softer grace,
 As the rough warrior's brow may bear
 A likeness to a sister fair
 Full well advised our Highland host,
 That this wild pass on foot be crossed,
 While round Ben Cruch's mighty base
 Wheel the slow steeds and lingering chaise
 The keen old Carle, with Scottish pride,
 He pruned his glen and mountains wide,
 An eye he bears for Nature's face,
 Aye, and for woman's lovely grace
 Len in such men degree we find
 The subtle Scot's observing mind,
 For, nor the chariot nor the team
 Could grapple of vulgar wonder gain,
 But when old Allan would expound
 Of Beil na-paish the Celtic sound,
 His bonnet doffed, and bow, applied
 His legend to my bonny bride,
 While Lucy blushed beneath his eye,
 Comteour and cautious, shrewd and sly,

2. Enough of him —Now, ere we lose,
 Plunged in the vale, the distant views,
 Turn thee, my love! look back once more
 To the blue lake's retiring shore
 On its smooth breast the shadows seem
 Like objects in a morning dream,
 What time the slumberer is aware
 He sleeps, and all the vision's air
 Even so, on yonder liquid lawn,
 In hues of bright reflection drawn,
 Distinct the shaggy mountains lie,
 Distinct the rocks, distinct the sky,
 The summer-clouds so plain we note
 That we might count each dappled spot
 We gaze and we admire, yet know
 The scene is all delusive show
 Such dreams of bliss would Arthur draw
 When first his Lucy's form he saw,
 Yet sighed and sickened as he drew,
 Despairing they could ere prove true!
3. But, Lucy, turn thee now, to view
 Up the fur glen, our destined way:
 The fury path that we pursue,
 Distinguished but by greener hue,
 Winds round the purple bae,
 While Alpine flowers of varied dye
 For carpet serve, or tapestry
 See how the little Runnels leap,
 In threads of silver, down the steep,
 To swell the brooklet's morn!
 Seems that the Highland Nard grieves
 Fantastic while her crown she weaves,
 Of rowan, birch, and alder leaves,
 So lovely, and so lone.
 There's no illusion there, these flowers,
 That wailing brook, these lovely bowers,
 Are, Lucy, all our own,
 And, since thine Arthur called thee wife.
 Such seems the prospect of his life!
 A lovely path, on-winding still,
 By gurgling brook and sloping hill
 'Tis true, that mortals cannot tell
 What waits them in the distant dell;
 But be it hap, or be it harm,
 We tread the path-way firm in arm.
4. And now, my Lucy, wot'st thou why
 I could thy bidding twice deny,
 When twice you prayed I would again
 Resume the legendary strain
 Of the bold Knight of Triermaln?
 At length yon peevish vow you swore,

That you would sue to me no more,
 Until the minstrel sit drew near,
 And made me prize a listening ear
 But, loveliest, when thou first didst pry
 Continuance of the knightly life,
 Was it not on the happy day
 That made thy hand mine o' n?
 When, dizzied with mine ecstasies,
 Nought past, or present, or to be,
 Could I or think on, hear, or see,
 Save, Lucy, thee alone!
 A giddy draught my rapture was,
 As ever chemist's magic glass

- 5 Again the summons I denied
 In yon fair capital of Clyde;
 My Harp—or let me rather choose
 The good old classic form—my Muse,
 (For Harp's an over-scutched phrase,
 Worn out by birds of modern days,)
 My Muse, then—seldom will she vale
 Save by dim wood and silent lake,
 She is a wild and rustic Maid,
 Whose foot unsandalled loves to tread
 Where the soft greensward is inlaid
 With varied moss and thyme,
 And, lest the simple lily-brud,
 That coronets her temples, fade,
 She hides her still in greenwood shade,
 To meditate her rhyme
- 6 And now she comes! The murmur dear
 Of the wild brook hath caught her ear,
 The glade hath won her eye,
 She longs to join, with each blithe rill
 That dances down the Highland hill,
 Her blither melody
 And now, my Lucy's way to cheer,
 She bids Ben-Crunch's echoes hear
 How closed the tale, my love whilere
 Loved for its chivalry
 List how she tells, in notes of flame,
 "Child Roland to the dark tower can na'!"—

CANTO THIRD

1. BIRKBEASTLE now must keep the Hold,
 Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall,
 Of Hartley burn the bowmen bold
 Must only shoot from battled wall,
 And Iddesdale my buckle spur,
 And Feviot now may belt the brand,
 Tairns and Ewes keep nightly stir,

And Eskdale foray Cumberland
 Of wasted fields and plundered flocks
 The Borderers bootless may complain,
 They lack the sword of brave De Vaux,
 There comes no aid from Triermal
 That lord, on high adventure bound,
 Hath wandered forth alone,
 And day and night keeps watchful round
 In the Valley of Saint John

- 2 When first began his vigil bold,
 The moon twelve summer nights was old,
 And shone both fair and full,
 High in the vault of cloudless blue,
 O'er streamlet, dale, and rock, she threw
 Her light composed and cool
 Stretched on the brown hill's heathy breast,
 Sir Roland eyed the vale,
 Chief where, distinguished from the rest,
 Those clustering rocks appeared then crest.
 The dwelling of the Fair distressed,
 As told gray Lyulph's tale
 Thus as he lay, the lamp of night
 Was quivering on his armour bright,
 In beams that rose and fell,
 And danced upon his buckler's boss,
 That lay beside him on the moss,
 As on a crystal well
- 3 Ever he watched, and oft he deemed,
 While on the mound the moonlight streamed,
 It altered to his eyes,
 Fain would he hope the rocks 'gan change
 To buttressed walls their shapeless range,
 Fain think, by transmutation strange,
 He saw gray towers rise
 But scarce his heart with hope throbbed high,
 Before the wild illusions fly,
 Which fancy had conceived,
 Abetted by an anxious eye
 That longed to be deceived
 It was a fond deception all,
 Such as, in solitary hall,
 Beguiles the musing eye,
 When, gazing on the sinking fire,
 Bulwark and battlement and spire
 In the red gulf we spy
 For, seen by moon of middle night,
 Or by the blaze of noontide bright,
 Or by the dawn of morning light,
 Or evening's western flame,
 In every tide, at every hour,

In mist, in sunshine, and in shower,
The rocks remained the same.

- 4 Oft has he traced the charmed mountain,
Oft climbed its crest, or paced it round,
Yet nothing might explore,
Save that the crags so rudely piled,
At distance seen, resemblance will
To a rough fortress bore
Yet still his watch the Warrior keep,
Feeds hard and spare, and seldom sleep,
And drinks but of the well,
Ever by day he walls the hill,
And when the evening gale is chill,
He seeks a rocky cell,
Like hermit poor to bid his beard,
And tell his life and his Creed,
Invoking every Saint at need,
For aid to burst the spell
- 5 And now the moon her orb has hid,
And dwindled to a silver thread,
Dim seen in middle heaven,
While o'er its curve careering fast,
Before the fury of the blast
The midnight clouds are driven
The brooklet raved, for on the hills
The upland showers had swollen the rills,
And down the torrents came,
Muttered the distant thunder died,
And frequent o'er the vale was spread
A sheet of lightning flame
De Vaux, within his mountain cave,
(No human step the storm durst drive,)
To moody meditation gave
Each faculty of soul,
Till, lulled by distant torrent sound,
And the sad winds that whistled round,
Upon his thoughts, in musing drowned,
A broken slumber stole
- 6 'Twas then was heard a heavy sound,
(Sound, strange and fearful there to hear,
'Mongst desert hills, where, leagues around,
Dwelt but the gorcock and the deer)
As starting from his couch of fern,
Again he heard, in clangour stern
That deep and solemn swell,
Twelve times, in measured tone, it spoke,
Like some proud minster's pealing clock,
Or city's 'larum bell
What thought was Roland's, first when he fell,
In that deep wilderness the knell

Upon his startled ear?—
 To slander warrior were I loth,
 Yet must I hold my minstrel troth,
 It was a thought of fear

- 7 But lively was the mingled thrill
 That chased that momentary chill,
 For Love's keen wish was there,
 And eager Hope, and Valour high,
 And the proud glow of Chivalry,
 That burned to do and dare
 Forth from the cave the Warrior rushed,
 Long ere the mountain-voice was hushed,
 That answered to the knell,
 For long and far the unwonted sound,
 Eddying in echoes round and round,
 Was tossed from fell to fell,
 And Glamara answer flung,
 And Grisdale-pike responsive rung,
 And Legbert heights their echoes swung,
 As far as Derwent's dell

- 8 Forth upon trackless darkness grazed
 The Knight, bedazzled and amazed,
 Till all was hushed and still,
 Save the swollen torrent's sullen roar
 And the night-blast that wildly bore
 Its course along the hill.
 Then on the northern sky there came
 A light, as of reflected flame,
 And over Legbert-head,
 As if by magic art controlled,
 A mighty Meteor slowly rolled
 Its orb of fiery red,
 Thou wouldst have thought some demon due
 Came mounted on that car of fire,
 To do his errand dread
 Far on the sloping valley's course,
 On thicket, rock, and torrent hoarse,
 Shingle and Scrae, and Fell and Force,
 A dusky light arose
 Displayed, yet altered, was the scene;
 Dark rock, and brook of silver sheen,
 Even the gay thicket's summer green
 In bloody tincture glows
- 9 De Vaux had marked the sunbeams set,
 At eve, upon the coronet
 Of that enchanted mound,
 And seen but crags at random flung,
 That, o'er the brawling torrent hung,
 In desolation frowned
 What sees he by that meteor's low?—
 A bannered Castle, Keep, and Tower,

Adown the vale the vapours float
And cloudy undulations moat
That tufted mound of mystic note,
As round its base they close
And higher now the fleecy tide
Ascends its stern and shaggy side,
Until the rury billows hide
The rock's majestic isle
It seemed a vale of filmy lawn,
By some fantastic fairy drawn
Around enchanted pile

12 The breeze came softly down the brook,
And sighing as it blew,
The veil of silver mist it shook,
And to De Vaux's eager look
Renewed that wondrous view
For, though the lustering vapour blaved
The gentle breeze, yet oft it waved
Its mantle's dewy fold,
And still, when shook that filmy screen,
Were towers and bastions dimly seen,
And Gothic battlements between
Their gloomy length unrolled
Speed, speed, De Vaux, ere on thine eye
Once more the fleeting vision die! —
The gallant Knight can speed
As prompt and light as, when the hound
Is opening, and the horn is wound,
Carcers the hunter's steed.
Down the steep dell his course amain
Hath rivalled archer's shaft,
But ere the mound he could attain,
The rocks their shapeless form begun,
And mocking loud his labour vain,
The mountain spirits laughed
Far up the echoing dell was borne
Their wild unearthly shout of scorn

13 Wroth waved the Warrior — "Am I then
Fooled by the enemies of men,
Like a poor hind, whose homeward way
Is hunted by malicious fiends?
Is Triermahn become your trunt,
De Vaux your scorn? False fiends, woe hurt!
A weighty curtain ve he bare,
The baleful blade so bright and square
And the tough shaft of heben wood,
Were oft in Scottish gore imbrued —
Backward his stately form he drew,
And at the rocks the weapon threw,
Just where one crag's projected crest
Hung proudly balanced o'er the rest.

Hurled with main force, the weapon's shock
 Rent a huge fragment of the rock
 If by mere strength 'twere hard to tell,
 Or if the blow dissolved some spell,
 But down the herdlong ruin came,
 With cloud of dust and flash of flame
 Down bank, o'er bush, its course was borne,
 Crushed lay the copse, the earth was torn
 Till, stayed at length, the ruin dread
 Cumbered the torrent's rocky bed,
 And bade the waters' high-swollen tide
 Seek other passage for its pride

14. When ceased that thunder, Triermahn
 Surveyed the mound's rude front again,
 And lo! the ruin had laid bare,
 Hewn in the stone, a winding stair,
 Whose mossed and fractured steps might lend
 The means the summit to ascend,
 And by whose aid, the brave De Vaux
 Began to scale these magic rocks,
 And soon a platform won,
 Where, the wild witchery to close,
 Within three fathoms' length arose
 The Castle of Saint John!
 No misty phantom of the air,
 No meteor-blazoned show was there,
 In morning splendour, full and fur,
 The massive fortress shone

- 15 Embattled high and proudly towered,
 Shaded by ponderous flunkers, lowered
 The portal's gloomy way
 Though for six hundred years and more
 Its strength had brooked the tempest's roar,
 The scutcheon'd emblems that it bore
 Had suffered no decay,
 But from the eastern battlement
 A turret had made sheer descent,
 And down in recent ruin rent,
 In the mud torrent lay
 El e, o'er the Castle's brow sublime,
 Insults of violence or of time
 Unfelt had passed away
 In shapeless characters of stone,
 The gate this stern inscription bore

SCRIPT

- 16 "Patience waits the destined day,
 Strong can clear the cumbered way,
 Warr or, who has waited long,
 Firm of soul, of brave strong,
 It is to the gaze
 A piece of ancient day

Never mortal builder's hand
 This enduring fabric planned,
 Sign and sigil, word of power,
 From the earth raised keep and tower,
 View it o'er, and pace it round
 Rampart, turret, battled mound;
 Dare no more! to cross the gate
 Were to tamper with thy fate,
 Strength and fortitude were vain,
 View it o'er—and turn again!

- 17 "That would I," said the Warrior bold,
 "If that my frame were bent and old,
 And my thin blood dropped slow and cold
 As ice in thaw,
 But while my heart can feel it dance,
 Blithe as the sparkling wine of France,
 And this good arm wields sword or lance,
 I mock these words of awe!"
 He said, the wicket felt the sway
 Of his strong hand, and straight gave way,
 And, with rude crash, and jarring cry,
 The rusty bolts withdraw.
 But o'er the threshold as he strode,
 And forward took the vaulted road,
 An unseen arm, with force amain,
 The ponderous gate flung close again,
 And rusted bolt and bar
 Spontaneous took their place once more,
 While the deep arch with sullen roar
 Returned then surly jar
 "Now closed is the gin and the prey within
 By the Rood of Lanercost!"
 But he that would win the war-wolf's skin,
 May rue him of his boast—
 Thus muttering on the Warrior went,
 By dubious light down steep descent

- 18 Unbarred, unlocked, unwatched, a port
 Led to the Castle's outer court;
 There the main fortress, broad and tall,
 Spread its long range of bower and hall,
 And towers of varied size
 Wrought with each ornament extreme
 That Gothic art, in wildest dream
 Of fancy, could devise
 But full between the Warrior's way
 And the main portal arch, there lay
 An inner moat,
 Nor bridge nor boat
 Affords De Vaux the means to cross
 The clear, profound, and silent fosse
 His arms aside in haste he flings,

And each a Tiberian tiger led,
 Held by as bright and frail a thread
 As Lucy's golden hair,
 For the leash that bound these monsters dead
 Was but of gossamer
 Each Maiden's short barbaric vest
 Left all unclosed the knee and breast,
 And limbs of shapely jet,
 White was their vest and turban's fold.
 On arms and ankles rings of gold
 In savage pomp were set,
 A quiver on their shoulders lay,
 And in their hand an assagai
 Such and so silent stood they there,
 That Roland well-nigh hoped
 He saw a band of statues rare,
 Stationed the giant's soul to scare,
 But, when the wicket oped,
 Each grisly beast 'gan upward draw,
 Rolled his grim eye, and spread his claw,
 Scented the air, and licked his jaw;
 While these weird Maids, in Moorish tongue,
 A wild and dismal warning sung —
 21 "Rash Adventurer, bear thee back!
 Dread the spell of Dahomay!
 Fear the race of Zahirak,
 Daughters of the burning day!
 "When the whirlwind's gusts are wheeling,
 Ours it is the dance to brud,
 Zarah's sands in pillars reeling,
 Join the measure that we tread,
 When the Moon has donned her cloak,
 And the stars are led to see,
 Shill when pipes the sad Siroc,
 Music meet for such as we
 "Where the shattered columns lie,
 Showing Carthage once had been,
 If the wandering Santon's eye
 Our mysterious rites has seen,—
 Oft he cons the prayer of death,
 To the nations pierches doom,
 Azrael's brand hath left the sheath,
 Moslems, think upon the tomb!"
 "Ours the scorpion, ours the snake,
 Ours the hydra of the fen,
 Ours the tiger of the brake,
 All that plagues the sons of men
 Ours the tempest's midnight wrack,
 Pestilence that wastes by day—
 Dread the race of Zahirak!
 Fear the spell of Dahomay!"

22 Unconouth and strange the accents shrill
 Rung those vaulted roofs among
 Long it was ere, faint and still,
 Died the far-resounded song
 While yet the distant echoes roll,
 The Warrior communed with his soul —
 "When first I took this venturesome quest,
 I swore upon the rood,
 Neither to stop, nor turn, nor rest,
 For evil or for good
 My forward path, too well I ween,
 Lies yonder fearful ranks between,
 For man unarmed, 'tis bootless hope
 With tigers and with fiends to cope—
 Yet, if I turn, what waits me there,
 Save famine dire and fell despair?—
 Other conclusion let me try,
 Since, choose how'er I list, I die
 Forward, lies faith and knightly fame:
 Behind, are perjury and shame
 In life or death I hold my word!"—
 With that he drew his trusty sword,
 Caught down a banner from the wall,
 And entered thus the fearful hall

23 On high each wryward Maiden threw
 Her swarthy arm, with wild halloo!
 On either side a tiger sprung—
 Against the leftward foe he flung
 The ready banner, to engage
 With tangling folds the brutal rage,
 The right hand monster in mid air
 He struck so fiercely and so fair,
 Through gullet and through spinal bone
 The trenchant blade had sheerly gone
 His grisly brethren rumped and yelled,
 But the slight leish their rage withheld,
 Whilst, 'twixt their ranks, the dangerous war
 Firmly, though swift, the champion strode
 Safe to the gallery's bound he drew,
 Safe passed an open portal through,
 And when 'gainst followers he flung
 The gate, judge if the echoes rung!
 Onward his daring course he bore,
 While, mixed with dying growl and roar,
 Wild jubilee and loud hurra
 Pursued him on his venturesome way

24 "Hurra, hurra! Our watch is done!
 We hail once more the tropic sun
 Pallid beams of northern day,
 Farewell, farewell! Hurra, hurra!

"Five hundred years o'er this cold glen
Hath the pale sun come round agen,
Foot of man, till now, hath ne'er
Dared to cross the Hall of Fen

"Warrior! thou, whose dauntless heart
Gives us from our ward to part,
Be as strong in future trial,
Where resistance is denied

"Now for Afric's glowing sky,
Zwenger wide and Atlas high,
Zaharik and Dahomy! —
Mount the winds! Hurra, hurra!" —

- 25 The wizard song at distance died
As if in ether borne astray,
While through waste halls and chambers wide
The Knight pursued his steady way,
Till to a lofty dome he came,
That flashed with such a brilliant flame
As if the wealth of all the world
Were there in rich confusion hurled
For here the gold, in sandy heaps,
With duller earth incorporate sleeps,
Was there in ingots piled, and there
Coined bridge of empery it bare,
Yonder, huge bars of silver lay,
Dimmed by the diamond's neighbouring ray
Like the pale moon in morning day,
And in the midst four Maidens stand,
The daughters of some distant land
Their hue was of the dark-red dye
That fringes oft a thunder sky,
Their hands palmetto baskets bare,
And cotton fillets bound their hair,
Slim was their form, their men was shy
To earth they bent the humbled eye,
Folded their arms, and suppliant kneeled
And thus their proffered gifts revealed

Chorus

- 26 "See the treasures Merlin piled
Portion meet for Arthur's child
Bathe in wealth's unbounded stream,
Wealth that Avonice ne'er could dream"

FIRST MAIDEN

"See these clots of virgin gold!
Severed from the sparry moor
Nature's mystic alchemy
In the mine thus bade them lie,
And their orient smile can win
Kings to stoop, and saints to sin." —

SECOND MAN.

"See there pearls, that long have shined;
These were tears by Nardis shed
For the loss of Marmel:
Tritons in the silver shell
Treasured them, till hard and white
As the teeth of Ampharite!"—

THIRD MAN.

"Does a livelier life delight?
Here are rubies blazing bright,
Here the emerald's fury green,
And the topaz glows between,
Here their varied hues unite
In the changeful chrysolite!"—

FOURTH MAN.

"Leave these gems of poorer stone,
Leave them all, and look on mine!
While their glories I compare,
Shade thine eyebrow with thy hand
Mid day sun and diamond glare
Blind the rash beholder's gaze!"—

CLERUS.

"Warrior, seize the splendid store;
Would 'twere all our mountain bore!
We should ne'er, in future wars,
Read, Peru, thy perished glory!"—

- 27 Calmly and unconcerned the Knight
Waved aside the treasures bright
"Gentle Maidens, rest, I pray!
But not thus my destined way
Let these hoisted brilliant toys
Braid the hair of girls and boys!
Bid your streams of gold expand
O'er proud London's thirsty land
De Vaux of wealth can never need,
Save to purvey him arms and steed,
And all the ore he designed to hoard
Inlays his helm and hilt his word!"—
Thus gently putting from their hold,
He left, unmoved, the dome of gold

- 28 And now the morning sun was high,
De Vaux was weary, faint and dry,
When lo! a plashing sound he hears,
A gladsome signal that he nears
Some frolic water-run,
And soon he reached a court-yard square,
Where, dancing in the sultry air,
Tossed high aloft, a fountain fair
Was sparkling in the sun

On right and left, a fair arcade
 In long perspective view displayed
 Alleys and bowers, for sun or shade,
 But, full in front, a door,
 Low-browed and dark, seemed as it led
 To the lone dwelling of the dead,
 Whose memory was no more

- 29 Here stopped De Vaux an instant's space,
 To bathe his parched lips and face,
 And marked with well-pleased eye,
 Reflected on the fountain stream,
 In rainbow hues the dazzling beam
 Of that gay summer sky
 His senses felt a mild control,
 Like that which lulls the weary soul,
 From contemplation high
 Relaxing, when the ear receives
 The music that the greenwood leaves
 Make to the breezes' sigh
- 30 And oft, in such a dreamy mood,
 The half shut eye can frame
 Fair apparitions in the wood,
 As if the Nymphs of field and flood
 In gay procession came
 Are these of such fantastic mould,
 Seen distant down the fair arcade,
 These Maids enlinked in sister-fold,
 Who, late at bashful distance strayed,
 Now tripping from the greenwood shade,
 Nearer the musing champion draw,
 And, in a pause of seeming awe,
 Again stand doubtful now?—
 Ah, that sly praise of witching powers!
 That seems to say, "To please be ours,
 Be yours to tell us how"—
 Their hue was of the golden glow
 That suns of Candahar bestow,
 O'er which in slight suffusion flows
 A frequent tinge of paly rose,
 Their limbs were fashioned fair and free,
 In Nature's justest symmetry,
 And, wreathed with flowers, with odours graced,
 Their riven ringlets reached the waist,
 In eastern pomp, its gilding pale
 The hennah lent each shapely nail,
 And the dark sumah gave the eye
 More liquid and more lustrous dye
 The spotless veil of misty lawn,
 In studied disarrangement, drawn
 The form and bosom o'er,
 To win the eye, or tempt the touch,

For modesty showed all too much—
Too much—yet promised more

- 31 "Gentle Knight, a while delay,"
Thus they sung, "thy toilsome way,
While we pay the duty due
To our Master and to you
Over Avarice, over Fear,
Love triumphant led thee here,
Warrior, list to us, for we
Are slaves to Love, are friends to thee

"Though no treasured gems have we
To proffer on the banded neck,
Though we boast nor arm nor heart
For the assagay or dart,
Swains have given each simple girl
Ruby lip and teeth of pearl,
Or, if dangers more you prize,
Flatterers find them in our eyes

"Stay, then, gentle Warrior, stay,
Rest till evening star on day,
Stay, O, stay!—in yonder bower
We will braid thy locks with flowers,
Spread the feast and fill the wine,
Charm thy ear with sounds divine,
Weave our dances till delight
Yield to languor, day to night.

"Then shall she you most approve
Sing the lays that best you love,
Soft thy mossy couch shall spread,
Watch thy pillow, prop thy head,
Till the weary night be o'er—
Gentle Warrior, wouldst thou more!—
Wouldst thou more, fair Warrior,—she
Is slave to Love and slave to thee"—

- 32 O do not hold it for a crime
In the bold hero of my rhyme,
For stoic look,
And meet rebuke,
He lacked the heart or time!
As round the band of sirens trip,
He kissed one damsel's laughing lip,
And pressed another's proffered hand,
Spoke to them all in accents bland,
But broke their magic circle through,
"Kind Maids," said he, "adieu, adieu!"
My fate, my fortune, forward lies"—
He said, and vanished from their eyes,
But, as he dared that darksome way,
Still heard behind their lovely lay

"Fair Flower of Courtesy, depart!
Go, where the feelings of the heart
With the warm pulse in concord move,
Go, where Virtue sanctions love!"—

- 33 Downward De Vaux through darksome ways
And tumed vaults has gone,
Till issue from their wildered maze,
Or safe retreat seemed none,
And e'en the dismal path he strays—
Grew wiser as he went on
For cheerful sun, for living air,
Foul vapours rise and mine-fires glaze,
Whose fearful light the dangers showed
That dogged him on that dreadful road
Deep pits, and lakes of waters dun,
They showed, but showed not how to shun
These scenes of desolate despair,
These smothering clouds of poisoned air,
How gladly had De Vaux exchanged,
Though 'twere to face yon tigers ranged.
Nay, soothful bards have said,
So perilous his state seemed now,
He wished him under arbour bough
With Asia's willing mud
When, joyful sound! at distance near
A trumpet flourished loud and clear,
And as it ceased, a lofty lay
Seemed thus to chide his lagging way —

- 34 "Son of Honour, theme of story,
Think on the reward before ye!
Danger, darkness, toil despise;
'Tis Ambition bids thee rise
"He that would her heights ascend
Many a weary step must wend,
Hand and foot and knee he tries
Thus Ambition's minions rise
"Lag not now, though rough the way,
Fortune's mood brooks no delay,
Grasp the boon that's spread before ye,
Monarch's power, and Conqueror's glory!"—

It ceased Advancing on the sound,
A steep ascent the wanderer found,
And then a turret stair
Not climbed he far its steepy round
Till fresher blew the air,
And next a welcome glimpse was given,
That cheered him with the light of heaven
At length his toil had won
A lofty hall with trophies dressed,
Where, as to greet imperial guest,

Four Maidens stood, whose crimson veil
Was bound with golden zone

- 35 Of Europe seemed the damsels all,
The first a nymph of lively Gaul,
Whose easy step and laughing eye
Her borrowed air of wit belie,
The next a maid of Spain,
Dark-eyed, dark-haired, sedate, yet bold,
While ivory skin and tress of gold,
Her shy and bashful comrade told
For daughter of Almaine
These Maidens bore a royal robe,
With crown, with sceptre, and with globe,
Emblems of empery
The fourth a space behind them stood,
And leant upon a harp, in mood
Of minstrel ecstasy
Of merry England she, in dress
Like ancient British Druidess,
Her hair an azure fillet bound,
Her graceful vesture swept the ground,
And, in her hand displayed,
A crown did that fourth Maiden hold,
But unadorned with gems and gold,
Of glossy laurel made

- 36 At once to brave De Vaux knelt down
These foremost Maidens three,
And proffered sceptre, robe, and crown,
Liegedom and seignorie
O'er many a region wide and far,
Destined, they said, for Arthur's heir,
But homage would he none —
“Rather,” he said, “De Vaux would ride,
A Warden of the Border side,
In plate and mail, than, robed in pride,
A monarch's empire own,
Rather, far rather, would he be
A free-born Knight of England free,
Than sit on Despot's throne”
So passed he on, when that fourth Maid,
As starting from a trance,
Upon the harp her fingers laid,
Her magic touch the chords obeyed,
Their soul awaked at once!

SONG OF THE FOURTH MAIDEN

“Quake to your foundations deep,
Stately Towers, and bannered Keep!
Bid your vaulted echoes mourn,
As the dreaded step they own

"Friends ! that wait on Merlin's spell,
Hear the foot-fall ! mark it well !
Spread your dusky wings abroad,
Bounce ye for your homeward road !

"It is His, the first who e'er
Dared the dismal Hall of Fear,
His, who hath the snares defied
Spread by Pleasure, Wealth, and Pride

"Quake to your foundations deep,
Bastion huge, and Turret steep !
Tremble Keep, and totter Tower !
This is Gyneth's waking hour"—

- * 37 Thus while she sung, the venturesome Knight
Has reached a bowei, where milder light
 Though crimson curtains fell,
Such softened shade the hill receives,
Her purple veil when twilight leaves
 Upon its western swell
That bowei, the grizer to bewitch,
Hath wondrous store of rare and rich
 As e'er was seen with eye ;
For there by magic skill, I wis,
Form of each thing that living is
 Was limned in proper dye
All seemed to sleep—the timid hare
On foam, the stag upon his lair,
The eagle in her eyrie fair
 Between the earth and sky
But what of pictured rich and rare
Could win De Vaux's eye-glance, where,
Deep slumbering in the fatal chair,
 He saw King Arthur's child !
Doubt, and anger, and dismay,
From her brow had passed away,
Forgot was that fell tourney-day,
 For, as she slept, she smiled
It seemed that the repentant Seer
Her sleep of many a hundred year
 With gentle dreams beguiled
- 38 That form of maiden loveliness,
 'Twixt childhood and 'twixt youth
That ivory chair, that sylvan dress,
The arms and ankles bare, express
 Of Lyulph's tale the truth
Still upon her garment's hem
Vanoë's blood made purple gem,
And the warder of command
Cumbered still her sleeping hand,
Still her dark locks dishevelled flow
From net of pearl e'er breast of snow ;

And so far the slumberer seems
 That De Vaur impeached his dreams,
 Vain and void of might,
 Hitting half her charms from sight
 Motionless awhile he stands,
 Folds his arms and clasps his hands,
 Trembling in his fitful joy,
 Doubtful how he shall destroy
 Long-enduring spell,
 Doubtful too, when slowly rise
 Dark-fringed lids of Gyneth's eyes
 What these eyes shall tell.
 "St George! St Mary! can it be
 That they will kindly look on me!"

- 39 Gently, lo! the Warrior kneels,
 Soft that lovely hand he steals,
 Soft to kiss, and soft to clasp—
 But the warder leaves her grasp
 Lightning flashes, rolls the thunder!
 Gyneth startles from her sleep,
 Towers tower, and trembles keep,
 Burst the Castle walls asunder!
 Fierce and frequent were the shocks,
 Melt the magic halls away,—
 —But beneath their mystic rocks,
 In the arms of bold De Vaux,
 Safe the Princess lay!
 Safe and free from magic power
 Blushing like the rose's flower
 Opening to the day,
 And round the Champion's brows were bound



THE LORD OF THE ISLES

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

FIRST PUBLISHED JANUARY 3, 1815.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE Scene of this Poem lies, at first, in the Castle of Ardmurish, on the coast of Argyleshire and, afterwards, in the Islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English, and the Barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Rathlin, on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claim to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable Lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish monarchy, and of Archdeacon Barbour, a correct edition of whose Metrical History of Robert Bruce will soon, I trust, appear under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr Jameson.

ABBOTSFORD, 10th December, 1814

CANTO FIRST

AUTUMN departs—but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,
Beneath a shroud of russet dropped with gold
Tweed and his tributaries mingle still,
Hoarser the wind, and deeper sounds the rill,
Yet lingering notes of sylvan music swell,
The deep toned cushat, and the redbreast shrill,
And yet some tints of summer splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on Lettriche's western fel

Autumn departs—from Gal's fields no more
Come rural sounds our kindred banks to cheer,
Blent with the stream, and gale that wafts it o'er,
No more the distant reapers' mirth we hear
The last blithe shout hath died upon our ear,
And harvest home hath hushed the clinging wain,
On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
Save where, sad haggard of the autumnal train,
Some age struck wanderer gleams few ears of scattered grain

Deem'st thou these saddened scenes have pleasure still,
Lovest thou through Autumn's fading realms to stray,

To see the heath-flower withered on the hill,
 To listen to the woods' expiring lay,
 To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
 To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
 On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
 And moralize on mortal joy and pain?—
 O! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel's train

No! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
 Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
 Though faint its beauties as the tints remote
 That gleam through mist in Autumn's evening sky,
 And few as leaves that tremble, sea and dry,
 When wild November hath his bugle wound,
 Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
 Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound,
 Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest found

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
 To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day,
 In distant lands, by the rough West removed,
 Still live some relics of the ancient lay
 For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
 With such the Seer of Skye the eye beguiles,
 'Tis known amid the pathless wastes of Rery,
 In Hairies known, and in Iona's piles,
 Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles.

1. "WAKE, Maid of Lorn!" the Mins'rels sung
 Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung,
 And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
 Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
 As 'mid the tuneful choir to keep
 The diapason of the Deep
 Lulled were the winds on Inninmore,
 And green Loch-Alline's woodland shore,
 As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
 In listing to the lovely measure
 And ne'er to symphony more sweet
 Gave mountain echoes answer meet,
 Since, met from mainland and from isle,
 Ross, Arrian, Illy, and Argyle,
 Each minstrel's tributary lay
 Paid homage to the festal day
 Dull and dishonoured were the bard,
 Worthless of guerdon and regard,
 Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
 Or lady's smiles, his noblest aim
 Who on that morn's resistless call
 Was silent in Artornish hall.

2. "Wake, Maid of Lorn!" 'twas thus they sang
 And yet more proud the descant they sang,
 "Wake, Maid of Lorn! high right is ours,

To charm dull sleep from Beauty's bower,
 Earth, Ocean, Air, have nought so dry
 But owns the power of minstrelsy
 In Lettermore the timid deer
 Will pause, the harp's wild chime to hear,
 Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dart
 Will long pursue the minstrel's bark,
 To list his notes, the eagle proud
 Will poise him on Ben-Cathlach's cloud,
 Then let not Maiden's ear undrun
 The summons of the minstrel train,
 But, while our harps wild music make
 Edith of Lorn, awake awake!

"O wake, while Dawn, with dewy shane,
 Wakes Nature's charms to vie with thine.
 She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
 To mate thy melody of voice,
 The dew that on the violet lies
 Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes;
 But, Edith, wake, and all we see
 Of sweet and fair shall yield to thee!" —
 "She comes not yet," gray Ferrand cried,
 "Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
 Those notes prolonged, that soothing come,
 Which best may mix with Beauty's dream,
 And whisper, with their silvery tone,
 The hope she loves, yet fears to own!" —
 He spoke, and on the harp-strings died
 The strains of flattery and of pride,
 More soft, more low, more tender fell
 The lay of love he bade them tell

- 4 "Wake, Maid of Lorn! the moments fly
 Which yet that maiden-name allow,
 Wake, Maiden, wake! the hour is nigh,
 When Love shall claim a plighted vow
 By Fear, thy bosom's fluttering guest,
 By Hope, that soon shall fears remove,
 We bid thee break the bonds of rest,
 And wake thee at the call of Love!"

"Wake, Edith, wake! in yonder bay
 Lies many a galley gaily manned,
 We hear the merry pibrochs play,
 We see the streamers' silken band
 What Chieftain's praise these pibrochs swell,
 What crest is on these banners wove,
 The harp, the minstrel, dare not tell —
 The riddle must be read by Love."

- 5 Retired her maiden train among,
 Edith of Lorn received the song,
 But turned the Minstrel's pride had o'er

That had her cold demeanour seen,
 For not upon her cheek awoke
 The glow of pride when Flattery spoke,
 Nor could their tenderest numbers bring
 One sigh responsive to the string
 As vainly had her maidens vied
 In skill to deck the princely bride
 Her locks, in dark-brown length arrayed
 Cathleen of Ulne, 'twas thine to braid,
 Young Eva with meet reverence drew
 On the light foot the silken shoe,
 While on the ankle's slender round
 Those strings of pearl fair Beatha wound,
 That, bleached Lochryan's depth within,
 Seemed dusky still on Edith's skin
 But Eimion, of experience old,
 Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold
 In many an artful plait she tied,
 To show the form it seemed to hide,
 Till on the floor descending rolled
 Its waves of crimson blent with gold

6 O! lives there now so cold a maid,
 Who thus in beauty's pomp arrayed,
 In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
 And conquest won—the bridal hour—
 With every charm that wins the heart
 By Nature given, enhanced by Art,
 Could yet the fair reflection view,
 In the bright mirror pictured true,
 And not one dimple on her cheek
 A tell-tale consciousness bespeak? —
 Lives still such maid?—Fair damsels, say,
 For further vouches not my lay,
 Save that such lived in Britain's isle,
 When Lorn's bright Edith scorned to smile

7 But Morag, to whose fostering care
 Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,
 Morag, who saw a mother's aid
 By all a daughter's love repaid,
 (Strict was that bond—most kind of all—
 Inviolable in Highland hall—)
 Gray Morag sat a space apart,
 In Edith's eyes to read her heart
 In vain the attendants' fond appeal
 To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal,
 She marked her child receive their care,
 Cold as the image sculptured fair,
 (Form of some sainted patroness,
 Which cloistered maids combine to dress
 She marked—and knew her nursing's heart
 In the vain pomp took little part

Wistful a while she gazed—then pressed
 The maiden to her anxious breast
 In finished loveliness—and led
 To where a turret's airy head,
 Slender and steep, and battled round,
 O'erlooked, dark Mull! thy mighty sound,
 Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
 Part thy swarth hells from Morven's shore.

- 8 "Daughter," she said, "these seas behold,
 Round twice a hundred islands rolled,
 From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
 To the green Ilas's fertile shore,
 Or mainland turn, where many a tower
 Owns thy bold father's feudal power,
 Each on its own dark cape reclined,
 And listening to its own wild wind,
 From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
 O'erwies the woodland and the waste,
 To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
 Of Connal with his rocks engaging
 Think'st thou, amid this ample round,
 A single brow but thine has frowned,
 To sadden this auspicious morn,
 That bids the daughter of Hugh Lorn
 Impledge her spousal faith to wed
 The Heir of mighty Somerled?
 Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
 The fair, the valiant, and the young,
 LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty name
 A thousand bards have given to fame.
 The mate of monarchs, and allied
 On equal terms with England's pride—
 From chieftain's tower to bondsman's cot,
 Who hears the tale, and triumphs not?
 The damsel dons her best attire,
 The shepherd lights his beltane fire,
 Joy, Joy! each warder's horn hath sung,
 Joy, Joy! each matin bell hath rung,
 The holy priest says grateful mass,
 Loud shouts each hardy galla glass,
 No mountain den holds outcast boor
 Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
 But he hath flung his task aside,
 And claimed this morn for holy-tide,
 Yet, empress of this joyful day,
 Edith is sad while all are gay"—
- 9 Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
 Resentment checked the struggling sigh,
 Her hurrying hand indignant dried
 The burning tears of injured pride—
 "Morag, forbear! or lend thy praise

To swell yon hireling hapers' lays
 Make to yon mads thy borst of power
 That they may waste a wondering hour
 Telling of banniers proudly borne,
 Of pealing bell and bugle horn,
 Or, theme more dem, of robes of price,
 Crownlets and gawds of rare device
 But thou, experienced as thou art,
 Think'st thou with these to cheat the heart,
 That, bound in strong affection's chain,
 Looks for return and looks in vain?
 No! sum thine Edith's wretched lot,
 In these brief words—He loves her not!

- 10 "Debate it not—too long I strove
 To call his cold observance love,
 All blinded by the league that stiled
 Edith of Lorn,—while, yet a child,
 She tripped the hearth by Morag's side,—
 The brave Lord Ronald's destined bride
 Ere yet I saw him, while afar
 His broadsword blazed in Scotland's war
 Trained to believe our fates the same,
 My bosom throbbed when Ronald's name
 Came gracing Fame's heroic tale
 Like perfume on the summer gale
 What pilgrim sought our halls, nor told
 Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold,
 Who touched the harp to heroes' praise,
 But his achievements swelled the lays?
 Even Morag—not a tale of fame
 Was hers but closed with Roland's name
 He came! and all that had been told
 Of his high worth seemed poor and cold,
 Time, lifeless, void of energy,
 Unjust to Ronald and to me!

- 11 "Since then, what thought had Edith's heart,
 And gave not plighted love its part!—
 And what requital? cold delay—
 Excuse that shunned the spousal day—
 It dawns, and Ronald is not here!—
 Hunts he Bentralla's nimble deer,
 Or lingers he in secret dell
 To bid some lighter love farewell
 And swear that though he may not scorn
 A daughter of the House of Lorn
 Yet, when these formal rites are o'er,
 Again they meet, to part no more?"—

- 12 —"Hush, daughter, hush! thy doubts remove
 More nobly think of Ronald's love
 Look, where beneath the castle gray
 His fleet unmoor from Aios-bay!"

- 15 Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
 Borne onward by the willing breeze,
 Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
 Streamered with silk, and tricked with gold,
 Manned with the noble and the bold
 Of Island chivalry
 Around their prows the ocean roars,
 And chafes beneath their thousand oars,
 Yet bears them on their way
 So fumes the war-horse in his might,
 That field-ward bears some valiant knight,
 Champs till both bit and boss are white,
 But, forming, must obey
 On each gay deck they might behold
 Lances of steel and crests of gold,
 And hauberks with their burnished fold,
 That shimmered fair and free,
 And each proud galley, as she passed,
 To the wild cadence of the blast
 Gave wilder minstrelsy
 Full many a shrill triumphant note
 Saline and Scallastle bade float
 Their misty shores round,
 And Morven's echoes answered well,
 And Duart heard the distant swell
 Come down the darksome Sound
- 16 So bore they on with mirth and pride,
 And if that labouring bark they spied,
 'Twas with such idle eye
 As nobles cast on lowly boor,
 When, toiling in his task obscure,
 They pass him careless by
 Let them sweep on with heedless eyes !
 But, had they known what mighty prize
 In that frail vessel lay,
 The famished wolf that prowls the wold
 Had scathless passed the unguarded fold,
 Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
 Unchallenged were her way !
 And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou on,
 With mirth and pride and minstrel tone !
 But hadst thou known who sailed so nigh
 For other glance were in thine eye !
 For other flush were on thy brow,
 That, shaded by the bonnet, now
 Assumes but ill the blithesome cheer
 Of bridegroom when the bride is near !
- 17 Yes, sweep they on !—We will not leave,
 For them that triumph, those who grieve
 With that armada gay
 Be laughter loud and jocund shout,

And birds to cheer the way all rout,
 With tale, romance, and lay,
 And of wild mirth each clamorous art,
 Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
 May stupify and stun its smart,
 For one loud busy day
 Yes, sweep they on!—But with that clift
 Abides the minstrel tale,
 Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
 And toil that strained each sinew stiff,
 And one sad Maiden's wail

- 18 All day with fruitless strife they toiled,
 With eve the ebbing currents boiled
 More fierce from strait and lake,
 And midway through the channel met
 Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
 And high their mingled billows jet,
 As spears, that, in the battle set,
 Spring upward as they break
 Then too the lights of eve were past,
 And louder sung the western blast
 On rocks of Innimmore,
 Rent was the sail, and strained the mast,
 And many a leek was gaping fast,
 And the pale steersman stood aghast,
 And gave the conflict o'er
- 19 'Twas then that One, whose lofty look
 Nor labour dulled nor terror shook,
 Thus to the Leader spoke
 "Brother, how hopest thou to abide
 The fury of this wildered tide,
 Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
 Until the day has broke?
 Didst thou not mark the vessel reel,
 With quivering planks, and groaning keel,
 At the last billow's shock?
 Yet how of better counsel tell,
 Though here thou seest poor Isabel
 Half-dead with want and fear,
 For look on sea, or look on land,
 Or yon dark sky, on every hand
 Despair and death are near
 For her alone I grieve—on me
 Danger sits light by land and sea,
 I follow where thou wilt,
 Either to bide the tempest's lou,
 Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
 Or rush amid their naval power,
 With war-cry wake their wassail-hour
 And die with hand on hilt"—
20. That elder Leader's calm reply

In steady voice was given,
 "In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succour dawns from Heaven
 Edward, turn thou the shattered sail,
 The helm be mine, and down the gale
 Let our free course be driven,
 So shall we 'scape the western bay,
 The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
 So safely hold our vessel's way
 Beneath the Castle wall,
 For if a hope of safety rest,
 'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
 Who seeks for shelter, storm-distressed,
 Within a chieftain's hall
 If not—it best beseems our worth,
 Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
 By noble hands to fall"—

- 21 The helm, to his strong arm consigned,
 Gave the reefed sail to meet the wind,
 And on her altered way,
 Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
 Like greyhound starting from the slip
 To seize his flying prey.
 Awaked before the rushing prow,
 The mimic fires of ocean glow,
 Those lightnings of the wave,
 Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
 And, flashing round, the vessel's side,
 With clivish lustre lave,
 While, far behind, their livid light
 To the dark billows of the night
 A gloomy splendour gave
 It seems as if old Ocean shakes
 From his dark brow the livid flakes
 In envious pique,
 To match the meteor light that streaks
 Grim Hecl's midnight sky
- 22 Nor lacked they steadier light to keep
 Their course upon the darkened deep,—
 Artornish, on her frowning steep
 Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
 Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
 And landward far, and far to sea,
 Her festal radiance flung
 By that blithe beacon-light they steered,
 Whose lustre mingled, well
 With the pale beam that now appeared
 As the cold Moon her head upreared
 Above the eastern Fell.
- 23 Thus guided on their course they bore
 Until they neared the mainland shore,

Short shelter in this leeward creek
 Prompt when the dawn the east shall stretch,
 Again to bend away"—

Answered the Wardei, "In what name
 Assert ye hospitable claim?"

Whence come, or whither bound?
 Hath Erin seen your parting sails?
 Or come ye on Norwegian gales?
 And seek ye England's fertile vales,
 Or Scotland's mountain-ground?"—

- 26 "Warriors—for other title none
 For some brief space we list to own,
 Bound by a vow—warriors are we,
 In strife by land, and storm by sea,
 We have been known to fame
 And these brief words have import dear
 When sounded in a noble ear,
 To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
 That gives us rightful claim
 Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
 And we in other realms will speak
 Fair of your courtesy,
 Deny—and be your niggard Hold
 Scorned by the noble and the bold,
 Shunned by the pilgrim on the wold,
 And wanderer on the lea!"
- 27 "Bold stranger, no—'gunst claim like thine
 No bolt revolves by hand of mine
 Though urged in tone that more expressed
 A monarch than a suppliant guest
 Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
 On this glad eve is free to all
 Though ye had drawn a hostile sword
 'Gunst our great ally, England's Lord,
 Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
 To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
 Or, outlawed, dwelt by greenwood tree
 With the fierce Knight of Ellerslie,
 Or aided even the murderous strife
 When Comyn fell beneath the knife
 Of that fell homicide The Bruce,
 This night had been a term of truce.—
 Ho, vassals! give these guests your care,
 And show the narrow postern stair"—
- 28 To land these two bold brethren leapt,
 (The weiry crew their vessel kept)
 And, lighted by the torches' flare,
 That scward flung their smoky glare,
 The younger knight that maiden bare
 Half lifeless up the rock;
 On his strong shoulder leaned her head,

And down her long dark tresses shed,
 As the wild vine, in tendrils spread,
 Droops from the mountain oak
 Him followed close that elder Lord,
 And in his hand a sheathed sword,
 Such as few arms could wield,
 But when he bound him to such task,
 Well could it cleave the strongest casque,
 And rend the surest shield

- 29 The rused portcullis' arch they pass,
 The wicket with its bars of brass,
 The entrance long and low,
 Flanked at each turn by loop holes strait,
 Where bowmen might in ambush wait,
 (If force or fraud should burst the gate,)
 To gall an entering foe
 But every jealous post of ward
 Was now defenceless and unbarred,
 And all the passage free
 To one low-browed and vaulted room,
 Where squire and yeoman, page and groom
 Pled their loud revelry

- 30 And, "Rest ye here," the Warder bade,
 "Till to our Lord your suit is said —
 And, comrades, gaze not on the mud,
 And on these men who ask our aid,
 As if ye ne'er had seen
 A damsel tired of midnight bark,
 Or wanderers of a moulding stark,
 And bearing martial mien" —
 But not for Echlin's reproof
 Would page or vassal stand aloof,
 But crowded on to stare,
 As men of courtesy untaught,
 Till fiery Edward roughly caught,
 From one the foremost there,
 His chequered plaid, and in its shroud,
 To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
 Involved his sister fair
 His brother, as the clansman bent
 His sullen brow in discontent,
 Made brief and stern excuse, —
 "Vassal, were thine the cloak of pall
 That decks thy Lord in bridal hall,
 'Twere honoured by her use" —

- 31 Proud was his tone, but calm, his eye
 Had that compelling dignity,
 His mien that bearing haught and high
 Which common spirits fear;
 Needed nor word nor signal more,
 Nod, wink, and laughter, all were o'er;

Upon each other back they bore,
 And grazed like startled deer
 But now appeared the Sceneschal,
 Commissioned by his lord to call
 The strangers to the Baron's hall,
 Where feasted fan and freck
 That Island Prince in nuptial tide,
 With Edith there his lovely bride,
 And her bold brother by her side,
 And many a chief, the flower and pride
 Of Western land and sea

Here pause we, gentles, for a space;
 And, if our tale hath won your grace,
 Grant us brief patience, and again
 We will renew the minstrel strain

CANTO SECOND

- 1 FILL the bright goblet, spread the festive board!
 Summon the gay, the noble, and the fan!
 Through the loud hall in joyous concert poured,
 Let mirth and music sound the dirge of Cuck!
 But ask thou not if Happiness be there,
 If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throes,
 Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear,
 Lift not the festal mask!—enough to know,
 No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal woe
- 2 With bakers' clang, with harpers' lay,
 With all that olden time deemed gay,
 The Island Chieftain feasted high,
 But there was in his troubled eye
 A gloomy fire, and on his brow
 Now sudden flushed, and faded now,
 Emotions such as draw their birth
 From deeper source than festal mirth
 By fits he paused, and harper's strain
 And jester's tale went round in vain,
 Or fell but on his idle ear
 Like distant sounds which dreamers hear
 Then would he rouse him, and employ
 Each art to aid the clamorous joy,
 And call for pledge and lay,
 And, for brief space, of all the crowd,
 As he was loudest of the loud,
 Seem gayest of the gay
- 3 Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
 Marked in brief mirth, or musing long
 The vacant brow, the unlistening ear,
 They gave to thoughts of raptures near,
 And his fierce starts of sudden glee
 Seemed bursts of bridegroom's ecstasy

Nor thus alone misjudged the crowd
 Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud
 And jealous of his honoured line,
 And that keen knight, De Argentine,
 (From England sent on errand high,
 The western league more firm to tie,)
 Both deemed in Ronald's mood to find
 A lover's transport-troubled mind
 But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
 Pierced deeper through the mystery,
 And watched, with agony and fear,
 Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer

- 4 She watched—yet feared to meet his glance,
 And he shunned hers,—till when by chance
 They met, the point of foeman's lance
 Had given a milder pang!
 Beneath the intolerable smart
 He writhed,—then sternly manned his heart
 To play his hard but destined part,
 And from the table spring
 “Fill me the mighty cup!” he said,
 “Erst owned by royal Somerled
 Fill it, till on the studded brim
 In burning gold the bubbles swim,
 And every gem of varied shine
 Glow doubly bright in rosy wine!
 To you, brave lord, and brother mine,
 Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
 The union of Our House with thine,
 By this fair bridal-link!”—

- 5 “Let it pass round!” quoth He of Lorn
 “And in good time—that winded horn
 Must of the Abbot tell,
 The haggard monk is come at last”—
 Lord Ronald heard the bugle blast,
 And on the floor at random cast,
 The untasted goblet fell
 But when the Warder in his ear
 Tells other news, his blither cheer
 Returns like sun of May,
 When through a thunder cloud it beams!—
 Lord of two hundred isles, he seems
 As glad of brief delay
 As some poor criminal might feel,
 When from the gibbet or the wheel
 Respite for a day
- 6 “Brother of Lorn,” with hurried voice
 He said, “And you, fair lords, rejoice!
 Here, to augment our glee,
 Come wandering knights from travel far,
 Well proved, they say, in strife of war,

- And tempest on the sea —
 Ho ! gave them at your board such place
 As best their presence seems to grace,
 And bid them welcome free ! —
 With solemn step, and silver wand,
 The Seneschal the presence scanned
 Of these strange guests : and well he knew
 How to assign their rank its due ;
 For, though the costly furs
 That erst had decked their caps were torn
 And then gay robes were over-worn
 And soiled their gilded spurs
 Yet such a high commanding grace
 Was in their mien and in their face,
 As suited best the princely dais,
 And royal canopy,
 And there he marshalled them their place,
 First of that company.
- 7 Then lords and ladies spake aside,
 And angry looks the error chide
 That gave to guests unnamed, unknown
 A place so near their prince's throne,
 But Owen Fraught said,
 " For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshal guests in bower and hall
 Has been my honoured trade
 Worship and bu'ch to me are known,
 By look, by bearing, and by tone,
 Not by furred robe or brodered zone
 And 'gainst an open bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state,
 That these three stringers oft have sate
 In higher place than now " —
- 8 " I, too," the aged Ferrand said,
 " Am qualified by minstrel trade
 Of rank and place to tell —
 Marked ye the younger stranger's eye,
 My mates, how quick, how keen, how high,
 How fierce its flashes fell,
 Glancing among the festal rout
 As if to seek the noblest out,
 Because the owner might not brook
 On any save his peers to look ?
 And yet it moves me more,
 That steady, calm, majestic brow,
 With which the elder chief even now
 Scanned the gay presence o'er,
 Like Being of superior kind,
 In whose high-toned impartial mind
 Degrees of mortal rank and state
 Seem objects of indifferent weight

The lady too—though closely tied
 The mantle veil both face and eye,
 Her motions' grace it could not hide,
 Nor cloud her form's fair symmetry "—

- 9 Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
 Loured on the haughty front of Lorn
 From underneath his brows of pride,
 The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
 And whispered closely what the ear
 Of Argentine alone might hear,
 Then questioned, high and brief,
 If, in their voyage, aught they knew
 Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
 Who to Rath-Frin's shelter drew,
 With Carrick's out-lawed Chief?
 And if, their winter's exile o'er,
 They harboured still by Ulster's shore,
 Or launched their galleys on the main,
 To vex their native land again?

- 10 That younger stranger, fierce and high,
 At once confronts the Chieftain's eye
 With look of equal scorn —
 "Of rebels have we nought to show,
 But if of Royal Bruce thou'dst know,
 I warn thee he has sworn,
 Ere thrice three days shall come and go,
 His banner Scottish winds shall blow,
 Despite each mean or mighty foe,
 From England's every bill and bow,
 To Allaster of Lorn "—
 Kindled the mountain Chieftain's ire,
 But Ronald quenched the rising fire;
 "Brother, it better suits the time
 To chase the night with Ferrand's rhyme,
 Than wake, 'midst mirth and wine, the jars
 That flow from these unhappy wars "—
 "Content," said Lorn, and spoke apart
 With Ferrand, master of his art
 Then whispered Argentine,—
 "The lay I named will carry smart
 To these bold strangers' haughty heart
 If right this guess of mine "—
 He ceased, and it was silence all,
 Until the Minstrel waked the hall

THE BROOCH OF LORN.

- 11 "Whence the brooch of burning gold,
 That clasps the Chieftain's mantle fold
 Wrought and chased with rare device,
 Studded fur with gems of price,
 On the varied tartans beaming,

As, through night's pale rainbow gleaming,
Fainter now, now seen afar,
Fitful shines the northern star ?

"Gem ! ne'er wrought on Highland mountain,
Did the fury of the fountain,
Or the mermaid of the wave,
Frame thee in some coral cave ?
Did in Iceland's darksome mine
Dwarf's swart hands thy metal twine ?
Or, mortal-moulded, comest thou here,
From England's love, or France's fear ?

- 12 "No !—thy splendours nothing tell
Foreign art or faery spell
Moulded thou for monarch's use,
By the over-weening Bruce,
When the royal robe he tied
O'er a heart of wrath and pride,
Thence in triumph wert thou torn,
By the victor hand of Lorn !

"While the gem was won and lost
Widely was the war-cry tossed !
Rung aloud Bendounish Fell,
Answered Douchart's sounding dell,
Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
When the homicide, o'ercome,
Hardly 'scaped with scath and scorn,
Left the pledge with conquering Lorn !

- 13 "Vain was then the Douglas brand,
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,
Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work,
Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De la Haye,
When this brooch, triumphant borne,
Beamed upon the breast of Lorn

"Farthest fled its former Lord
Left his men to brand and chord,
Bloody brand of Highland steel,
English gibbet, ree, and wheel
Let him fly from coast to coast,
Dogged by Comyn's vengeful ghost
While his spoils, in triumph worn,
Long shall grace victorious Lorn !"—

- 14 As glares the tiger on his foes,
Hemmed in by hunters, spears, and bows,
And, ere he bounds upon the ring,
Selects the object of his spring,—
Now on the bird, now on his Lord,
So Edward glared and grasped his sword—

But stein his brother spoke,—“Be still
 What art thou yet so wild of will,
 After high deeds and castings long,
 To chafe thee for a man’s song?—
 Well hast thou framed, Old Man, thy strain,
 To praise the hand that prays thy pains;
 Yet something might thy song have told
 Of Lorn’s three vassals true and bold,
 Who rent their Lord from Bruce’s hold,
 As underneath his heel he lay,
 And died to save him in the fray
 I’ve heard the Bruce’s sword and clasp
 Was clenched within their dying grasp.
 What time a hundred foemen more
 Rushed in and back the victor bore,
 Long after Lorn had left the strife,
 Full glad to ’scape with limb and life—
 Enough of this—And, Minstrel, hold,
 As minstrel hire, this chain of gold,
 For future lays a fair excuse
 To speak more nobly of the Bruce”—

- 15 “Now, by Columba’s shrine, I swear
 And every saint that’s buried there,
 ’Tis he himself!” Lorn sternly cried,
 “And for my kinsman’s death he dies.”—
 As loudly Ronald calls—“Forbear!
 Not in my sight while brand I bear,
 O’ermatched by odds, shall warrior fall,
 Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
 This ancient fortress of my race
 Shall be misfortune’s resting-place,
 Shelter and shield of the distressed,
 No slaughter-house for shipwrecked guest.”—
 “Talk not to me,” fierce Lorn replied,
 “Of odds or match!—when Comyn died
 Three daggers clashed within his side!
 Talk not to me of sheltering hall,
 The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
 On God’s own altar streamed his blood,
 While o’er my prostrate kinsman stood
 The ruthless murderer—e’en as now—
 With armed hand and scornful brow—
 Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
 And lay the outlawed felons low!”—

- 16 Then up sprung many a mainland Lord,
 Obedient to their Chieftain’s word
 Barcaldine’s arm is high in air,
 And Kinloch Allme’s blade is bare,
 Black Murthok’s dirk has left its sheath,
 And clenched is Dermid’s hand of death
 Their muttered threats of vengeance swell

Into a wild and wailike yell,
 Onward they press with weapons high,
 The affrighted females shriek and fly,
 And, Scotland, then thy brightest ray
 Had darkened ere its noon of day,
 But every chief of birth and fame,
 That from the Isles of Ocean came,
 At Ronald's side that hour withstood
 Pierce Lorn's relentless thirst for blood

17 Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high
 Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
 Mac-Niel, wild Bara's ancient thane,
 Duart, of bold Clan Gillian's strain,
 Feigus, of Canna's castled bay,
 Mac-Duffith, Lord of Colonsay,
 Soon as they saw the broadswords glance,
 With ready weapons rose at once,
 More prompt, that many an ancient feud
 Full oft suppressed, full oft renewed,
 Glowed 'twixt the chieftains of Argyle,
 And many a lord of ocean's isle
 Wild was the scene—each sword was blue,
 Back streamed each chieftain's shaggy hair,
 In gloomy opposition set,
 Eyes, hands, and brandished weapons met
 Blue gleaming o'er the social board,
 Flashed to the torches many a sword,
 And soon those bridal lights may shine
 On purple blood for rosy wine

18 While thus for blows and death prepared,
 Each heart was up, each weapon bared
 Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
 Still revered hospitable laws
 All menaced violence, but alike
 Reluctant each the first to strike,
 (For aye accursed in minstrel line
 Is he who brags 'mid song and wine,
 And, matched in numbers and in might,
 Doubtful and desperate seemed the fight)
 Thus threat and murmur died away,
 Till on the crowded hall there lay
 Such silence as the deadly still,
 Ere bursts the thunder on the hill
 With blade advanced, each Chieftain bold
 Showed like the Swoider's form of old,
 As wanting still the torch of life,
 To wake the marble into strife

19 That awful pause the stranger maid,
 And Edith, seized to pray for aid
 As to De Argentine they clung,
 Away her veil the stranger flung

And, lovely 'mid her wild despair,
 Fast stream'd her eye, wide flow'd her hair
 "O thou, of I nighthood once the flower,
 Sure refuge in distressful hour,
 Thou, who in Judah well hast fought
 For our dear faith, and oft hast sought
 Renown in nightly exercise,
 When this poor hand has deat the prize,
 Say, can thy soul of honour brook
 On the unequal strife to look,
 When butchered thus in peaceful hall,
 Those once thy friends, my brethren, fall!"—
 To Argentine she turned her lord,
 But her eye sought the Island Lord
 A flush like evening's setting flame
 Glowed on his cheek, his hardy frame
 As with a brief convulsion shook.
 With hurried voice and eager look,—
 "Fear not," he said, "my Isabel!"
 What said I—Edith!—all is well—
 Nay, fear not—I will well provide
 The safety of my lovely bride—
 My bride?"—but there the accents clung
 In tremor to his faltering tongue

- 20 Now rose De Argentine, to claim
 The prisoners in his sovereign's name,
 To England's crown, who, vassals sworn,
 'Gainst their liege lord had weapon borne—
 (Such speech, I ween, was but to hide
 His care their safety to provide,
 For knight more true in thought and deed
 Than Argentine ne'er spurred a steed)—
 And Ronald, who his meaning guessed,
 Seemed half to sanction the request
 This purpose fiery Torquil broke,—
 "Somewhat we've heard of England's folk,
 He said, "and, in our islands, some
 Hath whispered of a lawful claim,
 That calls the Bruce for Scotland's lord,
 Though dispossessed by foreign sword
 This craves reflection—but though right
 And just the charge of England's Knight,
 Let England's crown her rebels seize,
 Where she has power,—in towers like these,
 'Midst Scottish Chieftains summoned here
 To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
 Be sure, with no consent of mine,
 Shall either I or Argentine
 With chains or violence, in our sight,
 Oppress a brave and banished knight"—

- 21 Then waked the wild debate again,

With brawling thieat and clamour vain
 Vissals and menials, thronging in,
 Lent their brute rage to swell the din,
 When, far and wide, a bugle-clang
 From the dark ocean upward rang
 "The Abbot comes!" they cry at once,
 "The holy man, whose favoured glance
 Hath sainted visions known,
 Angels have met him on the way,
 Beside the blessed martyrs' bay,
 And by Columba's stone
 His monks have heard their hymnings high
 Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
 To cheer his penance lone,
 When at each cross, on guth and wold,
 (Their number thrice a hundred-fold,)
 His prayer he made, his beads he told,
 With Aves many a one—
 He comes our feuds to reconcile,
 A sainted man from sunted isle, -
 We will his holy doom abide,
 The Abbot shall our strife decide."—

- 22 Scarcely this fair record was o'er,
 When through the wide-revolving door
 The black-stoled brethren wind,
 Twelve sandalled monks, who relics bore
 With many a torch-bearer before,
 And many a cross behind
 Then sunk each fierce up-lifted hand,
 And dagger bright and flashing brand
 Dropped swiftly at the sight,
 They vanished from the churchman's eye,
 As shooting stars, that glance and die,
 Dart from the vault of night
- 23 The Abbot on the threshold stood,
 And in his hand the holy rood,
 Back on his shoulders flowed his hood,
 The torches' glaring ray
 Showed, in its red and flashing light,
 His withered cheek and amice white,
 His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
 His tresses scant and gray
 "Fair Lords," he said, "Our Lady's love,
 And peace be with you from above,
 And Benedicite!"—
 —But what means this? no peace is here!—
 Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal cheer?
 Or are these naked brands
 A seemly show for Churchman's sight
 When he comes summoned to unite
 Betrothed hearts and hands?"

- 24 Then, clanking hie with fiery zeal,
Proud Iorn first answered the appeal;—
“Thou comest, O holy Man,
True sons of blest church to greet,
But little deeming here to meet,
A wretch beneath the ban
Of Pope and Church, for murder done
Even on the sacred altar stone!—
Well mayst thou wonder as thou bidst I now
Such miscreant here, nor bid him bow,
Or dream of greeting, peace, or trace
With excommunicated Bane!
Yet well I grant, to end debate,
Thy sainted voice decide his fate.”—
- 25 Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
And knighthood's oath and honour's laws,
And Isabel, on bended knee,
Brought prayers and tears to back the plea;
And Edith lent her generous aid,
And wept, and Lorn for mercy prayed
“Hence,” he exclaimed, “degenerate man,
Wast not enough to Ronald's bow or
I brought thee, like a paramour,
Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
His careless cold approach to suit?—
But the bold Lord of Cumberland
The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand,
His it shall be—Now, no reply!
Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry.”
With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
Yet nought relaxed his brow of woe
- Then Argentine, in England's name,
So highly urged his sovereign's claim,
He waked a spark, that, long suppressed
Had smouldered in Lord Ronald's breast
And now, as from the flint the fire,
Flashed forth at once his generous ire—
“Enough of noble blood,” he said,
“By English Edward had been shed,
Since matchless Wallace first had been
In mockery crowned with wreaths of green,
And done to death by felon hand
For guarding well his father's land
Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
And valiant Seton—where are they?
Where Somerville, the kind and free?
And Fraser, flower of chivalry?
Have they not been on gibbet bound,
Their quarters slung to hawk and hound,
And hold we here a cold debate,
O ye'd more victims to their fate?”

What ! can the English Leopard's mood
 Never be gorged with northern blood ?
 Was not the life of Athole shed
 To soothe the tyrant's sickened bed ?
 And must his word, at dying day,
 Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay !—
 Thou flown'st, De Argentine,—My gage
 Is prompt to prove the strife I wage"—

- 27 "Not deem," said stout Dunvegan's knight
 "That thou shalt brave alone the fight !
 By saints of isle and mainland both,
 By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath,)
 Let Rome and England do their worst,
 Howe'er attainted or accused,
 If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,
 Once more to brave a battle-plain,
 If Douglas couch again his lance,
 Or Randolph dare another chance,
 Old Torquil will not be to lack
 With twice a thousand at his back—
 Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
 Good Abbot ! for thou know'st of old,
 Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
 Smack of the wild Norwegian still,
 Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
 For England's wealth, or Rome's applause"—

- 28 The Abbot seemed with eye severe
 The hardy Chieftain's speech to hear,
 Then on the monarch turned the Monk.
 But twice his courage came and sunk,
 Confronted with the hero's look,
 Twice fell his eye, his accents shook,
 At length, resolved in tone and brow,
 Sternly he questioned him—"And thou,
 Unhappy ! what hast thou to plead,
 Why I denounce not on thy deed
 That awful doom which canons tell
 Shuts paradise, and opens hell,
 Anathema of power so dread
 It blends the living with the dead,
 Bids each good angel soar away,
 And every ill one claim his prey,
 Expels thee from the church's care,
 And deafens Heaven against thy prayer,
 Arms every hand against thy life,
 Bans all who aid thee in the strife
 Nay, each whose succour, cold and scant
 With merest alms relieves thy want,
 Haunts thee while living,—and, when dead
 Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
 Reads Honour's scutcheon from thy hearse

Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
 And spins thy corpse from hallowed ground,
 Flung like vile carrion to the hound !
 Such is the dire and desperate doom,
 For sacrilege decreed by Rome,
 And such the well deserved meed
 Of thine unhallowed, ruthless deed "—

- 29 "Abbot !" the Bruce replied, "thy charge
 It boots not to dispute at large
 This much, howe'er, I bid thee know,
 No selfish vengeance dealt the blow,
 For Comyn died his country's foe
 Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
 Fulfilled my soon repented deed,
 Nor censure those from whose stern tongue
 The dire anathema has rung
 I only blame mine own wild ire,
 By Scotland's wrongs incensed to fire
 Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
 Far as I may, the evil done,
 And hears a penitent's appeal
 From papal curse and prelate's zeal
 My first and dearest task achieved,
 For Scotland from her thrall relieved,
 Shall many a priest in cope and stole
 Say requiem for Red Comyn's soul,
 While I the blessed cross advance,
 And expiate this unhappy chance,
 In Palestine, with sword and lance
 But, while content the church should know
 My conscience owns the debt I owe,
 Unto De Argentine and Lorn
 The name of traitor I return,
 Bid them defiance stern and high,
 And give them in their throats the lie !
 These brief words spoke, I speak no more
 Do what thou wilt, my shrift is o'er "—

- 30 Like man by prodigy amazed,
 Upon the King the Abbot gazed,
 Then o'er his pallid features glance
 Convulsions of ecstatic trance
 His breathing came more thick and fast,
 And from his pale blue eyes were cast
 Strange rays of wild and wandering light,
 Uprise his locks of silver white,
 Flushed is his brow, through every vein
 In azure tide the currents strain,
 And undistinguished accents broke
 The awful silence ere he spoke —

- 31 "De Bruce ! I rose with purpose dread
 To speak my curse upon thy head,

And give thee an outcast o'er
 To him who burns to shed thy gore,—
 But, like the Midianite of old,
 Who stood on Zophim, heaven-controlled,
 I feel within mine aged breast
 A power that will not be repressed
 It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
 It burns, it maddens, it constrains!—
 De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
 Hath at God's altar slain thy foe
 O'er-mastered yet by high behest,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be blest!"—
 He spoke, and o'er the astonished throng
 Was silence, awful, deep, and long

- 32 Again that light has fired his eye,
 Again his form swells bold and high,
 The broken voice of age is gone,
 'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone —
 "Thrice vanquished on the battle-plain,
 Thy followers slaughtered, fled, or ta'en,
 A hunted wanderer on the wild,
 On foreign shores a man exiled,
 Disowned, deserted, and distressed,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed,
 Blessed in the hall and in the field,
 Under the mantle as the shield
 Avenger of thy country's shame,
 Restorer of her injured fame,
 Blessed in thy sceptre and thy sword,
 De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful Lord,
 Blessed in thy deeds and in thy fame,
 What lengthened honours wait thy name!
 In distant ages, sire to son
 Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
 And teach his infants, in the use
 Of earliest speech, to filter Bruce
 Go, then, triumphant! sweep along
 Thy course, the theme of many a song!
 The Power, whose dictates swell my breast,
 Hath blessed thee and thou shalt be blessed —
 Enough—my short-lived strength decays,
 And sinks the momentary blaze —
 Heaven hath our destined purpose broke,
 Not here must nuptial vow be spoke,
 Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
 Our task discharged — Unmoor, unmoor!"—
 His priests received the exhausted Monk,
 As breathless in their arms he sunk
 Punctual his orders to obey,
 The train refused all longer stay,
 Embarked, raised sail, and bore away

CANTO THIRD

- 1 It was thou not maul'd, when o'er this startled head
Sudden and deep the thunder-pearl has rolled,
How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold?
The eye-grass shalcs not on the sod-built fold,
The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
The wall flower waves not on the ruined hold,
I'll, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the growing hill
- 2 Artornish! such a silence sunl.
Upon thy halls, when that gray Monk
His prophet-speech had spol'd,
And his obedient brethren's soul
Was stretched to meet the southern gale
Before a whisper woke
Then murmuring sounds of doubt and fear,
Close poured in many an anxious ear,
The solemn stillness broke;
And still they gazed with eager guess,
Where, in an oriel's deep recess,
The Island Prince seemed bent to press
What Lorn, by his impatient cheer,
And gesture fierce, scarce digned to hear
- 3 Starting at length with frowning lool,
His hand he clenched, his head he shook,
And sternly flung apart,—
“And deem'st thou me so mean of mood
As to forget the mortal feud,
And clasp the hand with blood embued
From my dear kinsman's herit’?
Is this thy rede?—a due return
For ancient league and friendship sworn?
But well our mountain proverb shows—
The faith of Islesmen ebbs and flows—
Be it even so—believe, ere long,
He that now bears shall wreak the wrong—
Call Edith—call the Maid of Lorn!
My sister, slaves!—for further scorn,
Be sure nor she nor I will stray—
Away, De Argentine, away!
We nor ally nor brother know
In Bruce's friend, or England's foe”—
- 4 But who the Chieftain's rage can tell,
When, sought from lowest dungeon cell
To highest tower the castle round,
No Lady Edith was there found!
He shouted, “Falsehood!—treachery!
Revenge and blood!—a lordly need
To him that will avenge the deed!
A Baron's lands!”—His frantic mood

Was scarcely by the news withstood
 That Morag shated his sister's flight,
 And that, in hurry of the night,
 'Scaped noteless, and without remark,
 Two strangers sought the Abbot's bark —
 "Man every galley!—fly—pursue!
 The priest his treachery shall rue!
 Ay, and the time shall quickly come,
 When we shall hear the thanks that Rome
 Will pay his feigned prophecy!"—
 Such was fierce Lorn's indignant cry
 And Cormac Doil in haste obeyed,
 Hoisted his sail, his anchor weighed,
 (For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
 A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil)
 But others, lingering, spoke apart,—
 "The Maid has given her maiden heart
 To Ronald of the Isles,
 And, fearful lest her brother's word
 Bestow her on that English Lord,
 She seeks Iona's piles,
 And wisely deems it best to dwell
 A votaress in the holy cell,
 Until these feuds, so fierce and fell,
 The Abbot reconciles!"—

- 5 As, impotent of ire, the hall
 Echoed to Lorn's impatient call,
 "My horse, my mantle, and my train!
 Let none who honours Lorn remain!"—
 Counteous, but stern, a bold request
 To Bruce De Argentine addressed
 "Lord Earl," he said,—“I cannot chuse
 But yield such title to the Bruce,
 Though name and earldom both be gone,
 Since he braced rebel's armour on —
 But, Earl or Seif—rude phrase was thine
 Of late, and lunched at Argentine,
 Such as compels me to demand
 Redress of honour at thy hand
 We need not to each other tell
 That both can wield their weapons well,
 Then do me but the soldier grace,
 This glove upon thy helm to place
 Where we may meet in fight,
 And I will say, as still I've said,
 Though by ambition far misled,
 Thou art a noble knight!"—
- 6 'And I,' the princely Bruce replied,
 'Might term it stain on knighthood's pride
 That the bright sword of Argentine
 Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine,—

But, for your brave request,
 Be sure the honoured pledge you gave
 In every battle-field shall wave
 Upon my helmet-crest,
 Believe, that if my hasty tongue
 Hath done thine honour causeless wrong,
 It shall be well redressed
 Not dearer to my soul was glove,
 Bestowed in youth by lady's love,
 Than this which thou hast given !
 Thus, then, my noble foe I greet,
 Health and high fortune till me meet,
 And then—what pleases Heaven ”—

- 7 Thus parted they—for now, with sound
 Like waves rolled back from rocky ground,
 The friends of Lorn retire,
 Each man and chieftain, with his train,
 Draws to his mountain towers again,
 Pondering how mortal schemes prove vain,
 And mortal hopes expire
 But through the castle double guard,
 By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful ward,
 Wicket and gate were trebly barred,
 By beam and bolt and chain,
 Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
 He prayed excuse for mirth broke short,
 And bade them in Artornish fort
 In confidence remain
 Now torch and menial tendance led
 Chieftain and knight to bower and bed,
 And beads were told, and aves said,
 And soon they sunk away
 In'o such sleep as wont to shed
 Oblivion on the weary head,
 After a toilsome day

- 8 But soon up-roused, the Monarch cried
 To Edward slumbering by his side,
 “Awake, or sleep for aye !
 Even now there jarred a secret door—
 A taper light gleams on the floor—
 Up, Edward, up, I say !
 Some one glides in like midnight ghost—
 —Nay, strike not ! 'tis our noble Host ”—
 Advancing then his taper's flame,
 Ronald stepped forth, and with him came
 Dunvegan's chief—each bent the knee
 To Bruce, in sign of fealty,
 And proffered him his sword,
 And hailed him in a monarch's style,
 As king of mainland and of isle,
 And Scotland's rightful lord

‘And O,” said Ronald, “Owned of Heaven!
 Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
 By falsehood’s arts from duty driven,
 Who rebel falchion drew,
 Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
 Even while I strove against thy claim
 Paid homage just and true?”—
 “Alas! dear youth, the unhappy time,”
 Answered the Bruce, “must bear the crime,
 Since, guiltier far than you,
 Even I”—he paused, for Falknuk’s woes
 Upon his conscious soul rose
 The Chieftain to his breast he pressed,
 And in a sigh concealed the rest

- 9 They proffered aid, by arms and might,
 To repossess him in his right,
 But well their counsels must be weighed,
 Ere banners raised and musters made,
 For English hire and Lorn’s intrigues
 Bound many chiefs in southern leagues
 In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
 To his new vassals frankly told —
 “The winter worn in exile o’er,
 I longed for Carnick’s kindred shore
 I thought upon my native Ayi,
 And longed to see the burly faie
 That Clifford makes, whose lordly call
 Now echoes through my father’s hall
 But first my course to Arran led,
 Where valiant Lennox gathers head,
 And on the sea, by tempest tossed,
 Our barks dispersed, our purpose crossed,
 Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
 Far from her destined course had run,
 When that wise will, which masters ours,
 Compelled us to your friendly towers” —

- 10 Then Torquil spoke “The time craves speed!
 We must not linger in our deed,
 But instant pay our Sovereign Liege
 To shun the perils of a siege
 The vengeful Lorn, with all his powers,
 Lies but too near Artornish towers,
 And England’s light-armed vessels ride,
 Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
 Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
 And sweep each strait, and guard each shore.
 Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
 Secret and safe my Liege must lie
 In the fair bounds of friendly Skye,
 Torquil thy pilot and thy guide” —
 “Not so, brave Chieftain,” Ronald cried;

"Myself will on my Sovereign wait,
 And raise in arms the men of Sleete,
 Whilst thou, renowned where chiefs debate,
 Shalt sway their souls by counsel sage,
 And awe them by thy locks of age"—
 "And if my words in weight shall fail,
 This ponderous sword shall turn the scale"—

- 11 "The scheme," said Bruce "contents me well,
 Meantime, 'twere best that Isabel,
 For safety, with my bark and crew,
 Again to friendly I run draw
 There Edward, too, shall with her wand,
 In need to cheer her and defend,
 And muster up each scattered friend"—
 Here seemed it as Lord Ronald's ear
 Would other counsel gladder hear,
 But, all achieved as soon as planned,
 Both barks, in secret armed and manned,
 From out the haven bore;
 On different voyage forth they ply,
 This for the coast of winged Skye,
 And that for Erin's shore

- 12 With Bruce and Ronald bides the tale
 To favouring winds they gave the sail,
 Till Mull's dark headlands scarce they knew
 And Ardnamurchan's hills were blue
 But then the squalls blew close and hard,
 And, fun to strike the galley's yard,
 And take them to the oar,
 With these rude seas, in weery plight,
 They strove the livelong day and night,
 Nor till the dawning had a sight
 Of Skye's romantic shore
 Where Coolin stoops him to the west,
 They saw upon his shivered crest
 The sun's arising gleam,
 But such the labour and delay,
 Lie they were moored in Scarrigh bay,
 (For calmer haven compelled to stay,)
 He shot a western beam
 Then Ronald said,—"If true mine eye,
 These are the savage wilds that lie
 North of Strathnurdill and Dunskey,
 No human foot comes here,
 And, since these adverse breezes blow,
 If my good Liege love hunter's bow,
 What hinders that on land we go,
 And strike a mountain deer?
 Allan, my Page, shall with us wend;
 A bow full deftly can he bend,
 And, if we meet a herd, may send

A shaft shall mend our cheer"—
 Then each took bow and bolts in hand,
 Then row-boat launched, and leapt to land,
 And left their skiff and trim,
 Where a wild stream, with headlong shock,
 Came brawling down its bed of rock,
 To mingle with the main

- 13 A while their route they silent made,
 As men who stalk for mountain deer,
 Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,
 "St Mary! what a scene is here!
 I've traversed many a mountain-stand,
 Abroad and in my native land,
 And it has been my lot to tread
 Where safety more than pleasure led,
 Thus, many a waste I've wandered o'er,
 Clomb many a crag, crossed many a moor;
 But, by my halidome,
 A scene so rude, so wild as this,
 Yet so sublime in barrenness,
 Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press,
 Where'er I happened to roam"—

- 14 No marvel thus the Monarch spake,
 For rarely human eye has known
 A scene so stern as that dread lake,
 With its dark ledge of barren stone
 Seems that primeval earthquake's sway
 Hath rent a strange and shattered way
 Through the rude bosom of the hill,
 And that each naked precipice,
 Sable ravine and dark abyss,
 Tells of the outrage still
 The wildest glen, but this, can show
 Some touch of Nature's genial glow,
 On high Benmore green mosses grow,
 And heath-bells bud in deep Glencoe,
 And copse on Cruchan-Ben,
 But here, above, around, below,
 On mountain or in glen,
 Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
 Nor tught of vegetative power,
 The weary eye may ken
 For all is rocks at random thrown,
 Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
 As if were here denied
 The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew,
 That clothe with many a varied hue
 The bleakest mountain-side

- 15 And wilder, forward as they wound,
 Were the proud cliffs and lake profound

Huge terraces of granite black
 Voided rude and cumbered track ;
 For from the mountain hoar,
 Hailed headlong in some night of fear,
 When velled the wolf and fled the deer,
 Loose crags had toppled o'er,
 And some, chance-poised and balanced, lay,
 So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
 In Nature's rage at random thrown,
 Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base
 The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle furled,
 Or on the sable waters curled,
 Or, on the eddying breezes whirled,
 Dispersed in middle air
 And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
 When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down,
 And when return the sun's glad beams,
 Whitened with foam a thousand streams
 Leap from the mountain's crown

- 16 "This lake," said Bruce, "whose barriers drear
 Are precipices sharp and sheer,
 Yielding no track for goat or deer,
 Save the black shelves we tread,
 How term you its dark waves? and how
 Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,
 And yonder peak of dread,
 That to the evening sun uplifts
 The griesly gulphs and slaty rifts,
 Which seem its shivered head?"—
 "Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
 Coolin the ridge, as birds proclaim,
 From old Cuchullin, chief of fame
 But bards, familiar in our isles
 Rather with Nature's frowns than smiles,
 Full oft their careless humours please
 By sportive names for scenes like these
 I would old Torquil were to show
 His Maidens with their breasts of snow,
 Or that my noble Liege were nigh
 To hear his Nurse sing lullaby!
 (The Muds—tall cliffs with breakers white
 The Nurse—a torrent's roaring might,)
 Or that your eye could see the mood
 Of Corrieveken's whirlpool rude,
 When dons the Hag her whitened hood—

'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
For scenes so stern, fantastic names' —

17 Answered the Bruce, "And musing mird
Might here a graver moral find
These mighty cliffs, that heave on high
Their naked brows to middle sky,
Indifferent to the sun or snow,
Where nought can fade, and nought can blow,
May they not mark a Monarch's fate, —
Raised high mid storms of strife and state,
Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
His soul a rock, his heart a waste?
O'er hope and love and fear aloft
High rears his crown'd head—But soft!
Look, underneath yon jutting crag
Are hunters and a slaughtered stag
Who may they be? But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread?" —

18 "So said I—and believed in sooth,"
Ronald replied, "I spoke the truth
Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
Five men—they mark us, and come on,
And by their badge on bonnet borne,
I guess them of the kind of Lorn,
Foes to my Liege"—"So let it be,
I've faced worse odds than five to three—
—But the poor Page can little aid,
Then be our battle thus arrayed,
If our free passage they contest,
Cope thou with two, I'll match the rest"—
"Not so, my Liege—for by my life,
This sword shall meet the treble strife,
My strength, my skill in arms, more small,
And less the loss should Ronald fall
But islesmen soon to soldiers grow,—
Allan has sword as well as bow,
And were my Monarch's order given,
Two shifts should make our number even"—
"No! not to save my life!" he said,
"Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spilled—we soon shall know
Whether they come as friend or foe"—

19 Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh, —
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye
Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-looked, unwilling to be seen,
They moved with half-resolved pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy face
The foremost two were fair arrayed,
With bogue and bonnet, kiew and plaid,
And bore the aims of mountaineers

Daggers and broadsword, bows and spears
 The three, that lagged small space behind,
 Seemed serfs of more degraded kind,
 Goat-skins or deer-hide, o'er them cast
 Made a rude fence against the blast,
 Then arms and feet and heads were bare,
 Matted their beards, unhorn their hair
 For arms, the cutliffs bore in hand
 A club, in one, a rusty brand

- 20 Onward, still mute, they kept the track,—
 "I tell who ye be, or else stand back,"
 Said Bruce, "In deserts when they meet,
 Men pass not as in peaceful street"—
 Still, at his stern command, they stood,
 And proffered greeting brief and rude,
 But acted courtesy so ill
 As seemed of fear, and not of will
 "Wanderers we are, as you may be,
 Men hither driven by wind and sea,
 Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
 Will share with you this fallow deer"—
 "If from the sea, where lies your bark?"—
 "Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!
 Wicked yesternight, but we are men
 Who little sense of peril ken
 The shades come down—the day is shut—
 Will you go with us to our hut?"—
 "Our vessel waits us in the bay,
 Thanks for your proffer—have good day"—
 "Was that your galley, then, which rode
 Not far from shore when evening glowed?"—
 "It was"—"Then spare your needless pain,
 There will she now be sought in vain
 We saw her from the mountain head,
 When with St George's blazon red
 A southern vessel bore in sight,
 And yours raised sail, and took to flight"—
- 21 "Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!"
 Thus with Lord Ronald communed Bruce,
 "Nor rests there light enough to show
 If this their tale be true or no
 The men seem bred of churlish kind,
 Yet rugged brows have bosoms kind,
 We will go with them—food and fire
 And sheltering roof our wants require
 Sure guard 'gainst treachery will we keep,
 And watch by turns our comrades' sleep—
 Good fellows, thanks, your guests we'll be,
 And well will pay the courtesy
 Come, lead us where your lodging lies,—
 —Nay, soft! we mix not companies—

Show us the path o'er crag and stone,
And we will follow you,—lead on."

- 22 They reached the dreary cabin, made
Of suls against a rock displayed,

And there, on entering, found
A slender boy, whose form and mien
Ill suited with such savage scene,
In cap and cloak of velvet green,

Low seated on the ground
His garb was such as minstrels wear,
Dark was his hue, and dark his hair,
His youthful cheek was mured by care,

His eyes in sorrow drowned
"Whence this poor boy?"—As Ronald spoke,
The voice his trance of anguish broke,
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He roused his head with start and scream,

And wildly gazed around,
Then to the wall his face he turned,
And his dark cheek with blushes burned

- 23 'Whose is the boy?' again he said
"By chance of war our captive made,
He may be yours, if you should hold
That music his more charms than gold,
For, though from earliest childhood mute,
The lad can deftly touch the lute,

And on the rote and viol play,
And well can drive the time away
For those who love such glee,
For me, the favouring breeze, when loud
It pipes upon the gillie's shroud,
Makes blither melody"—

"Hath he, then, sense of spoken sound?"—

"Ay, so his mother bade us know,
A clone in our late shipwreck drowned,
And hence the silly stripling's woe
More of the youth I cannot say,
Our captive but since yesterday,
When wind and weather waxed so grim,
We little listed think of him—
But why waste time in idle words?
Sit to your cheer,—unbelt your swords"—
Sudden the captive turned his head,
And one quick glance to Ronald sped
It was a keen and warning look,
And well the Chief the signal took

- 24 "Kind host," he said, "our needs require
A separate board and separate fire,
For know, that on a pilgrimage
Wend I, my comrade, and this page.
And, sworn to vigil and to fast,

Long as this hallowed task shall last,
 We never doff the plaid nor sword,
 Or feast we at a stranger's board
 And never share one common sleep,
 But one must still lie vigil keep.
 Thus, for our separate use, good friend,
 We'll hold this hut's remoter end—
 "A churl it is, 'tis the elder's will,
 "And hard, meaning, to be civil
 How say you, if, to serve the cause
 That pays our kin his hire, we return
 We should refuse to share our fire?"—
 —"Then say we, that our words are steel
 And our vow binds us not to fail.
 Where gold or force may buy reward—
 Their host's dark brow grew frown and fowl
 His teeth are clenched, his features swell,
 Yet sunk the felon's moody ire
 Before Lord Ronald's glance of fire,
 Nor could his craven courage brook
 The Monarch's calm and dauntless look
 With laugh constrained,—
 "Let every man
 Follow the fashion of his clan!
 Each to his separate quarters keep,
 And feed or fast, or wake or sleep—"

- 25 Their fire at separate distance burn,
 By turns they eat, keep guard by turns,
 For evil seemed that old man's eye,
 Dark and designing, fierce yet shy
 Still he avoided forward look,
 But slow and circumspectly took
 A circling, never ceasing glance,
 By doubt and cunning marked at once,
 Which shot a mischief-boding ray,
 From under eyebrow shaggy and gray
 The younger, too, who seemed his son,
 Had that dark look, the timid shun,
 The half-clad serfs behind them sate,
 And scowled a glare 'twixt fear and hate—
 Till all, as darkness onward crept,
 Couched down and seemed to sleep, or slept
 Nor he, that boy, whose powerless tongue
 Must trust his eyes to warn his wrong,
 A longer watch of sorrow made,
 But stretched his limbs to slumber laid
- 26 Not in his dangerous host confides
 The King, but wary watch provides
 Ronald keeps ward till midnight past,
 Then wakes the King, young Allan last,
 Thus ranked, to give the youthful Page
 The rest required by tender age

—What is Lord Ronald's wakeful thought
 To chase the languor toil had brought?—
 (For deem not that he deigned to throw
 Much care upon such coward foe,)—
 He thinks of lovely Isabel,
 When at her footman's feet she fell,
 Nor less, when, placed in princely selle,
 She glanced on him with favouring eyes,
 At Woodstock when he won the prize
 Not, fain in joy in sorrow fain,
 In pride of place as mid despair,
 Must she alone engross his care
 His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
 To Edith, turn—O how decide,
 When here his love and heart are given,
 And there his faith stands plight to Heaven!
 No drowsy ward his his to keep,
 For seldom lovers long for sleep
 Till sung his midnight hymn the owl,
 Answered the dog-fox with his howl,
 Then waked the King—at his request,
 Lord Ronald stretched himself to rest

27. What spell was good King Robert's, say,
 To drive the weary night away?
 His was the patriot's burning thought,
 Of Freedom's battle bravely fought,
 Of castles stormed, of cities freed,
 Of deep design and daring deed,
 Of England's roses rest and torn,
 And Scotland's cross in triumph worn,
 Of rout and rally, war and truce,—
 As heroes think, so thought the Bruce
 No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
 Sleep shunned the Monarch's thoughtful eye
 Now over Coolin's eastern head
 The grayish light begins to spread,
 The otter to his cavern drew,
 And clamoured shrill the wakening mew,
 Then watched the Page—to needful rest
 The King resigned his anxious breast

- 28 To Allan's eyes was harder task
 The weary watch their safeties ask
 He trimmed the fire, and gave to shine
 With bickering light the splintered pine,
 Then gazed a while, where silent laid
 Their hosts were shrouded by the plaid
 But little fear waked in his mind,
 For he was bred of martial kind,
 And, if to manhood he arrive,
 May match the boldest knight alive
 Then thought he of his mother's tower,

His little sisters' green wood bower,
 How there the Easter-gimbols pass,
 And of Din Joseph's lengthened mass
 But still before his weery eye
 In rays prolonged the blazes die—
 Again he roused him—on the lake
 Looked forth, where now the twilight-flake
 Of pale cold dawn began to wake
 On Coolm's cliffs the mist lay suled,
 The morning breeze the lake had curled,
 The short dark waves, heaved to the land,
 With ceaseless plash kissed cliff or sand,—
 It was a slumbrous sound—he turned
 To tales at which his youth had burned,
 Of pilgrim's path by demon crossed,
 Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
 Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
 And mermaid's alabaster grot,
 Who bathes her limbs in sunless well
 Deep in Strath aird's enchanted cell
 Thither in fancy rapt he flies,
 And on his sight the vaults arise,
 That hut's dark walls he sees no more,
 His foot is on the marble floor,
 And o'er his head the dazzling spars
 Gleam like a firmament of stars!
 —Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph speak
 Her anger in that thrilling shriek?—
 No! all too late, with Allan's dream
 Mingled the captive's warning scream!
 As from the ground he strives to start,
 A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
 Upward he casts his dizzy eyes,
 Murmurs his master's name, and dies!

- 29 Not so awoke the King! his hand
 Snatched from the flame a knotted brand,
 The nearest weapon of his wrath,
 With this he crossed the murderer's path,
 And venged young Allan well!
 The spattered brain and bubbling blood
 Hissed on the half-extinguished wood,
 The miscreant gasped and fell!
 Not rose in peice the Island Lord,
 One catiff died upon his sword,
 And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
 In mortal grapple over-thrown
 But while Lord Ronald's dagger drank
 The life blood from his panting flank,
 The Father ruffian of the band
 Behind him rears a coward hand!
 —O for a moment's aid,

Till Bruce, who deals no double blow,
 Dash to the earth another foe,
 Above his comrade laid !—
 And it is gained—the captive sprung
 On the raised arm, and closely clung,
 And, ere he shook him loose,
 The mastered felon pressed the ground,
 And gasped beneath a mortal wound,
 While o'er him stands the Bruce

30. "Miscreant ! while lasts thy flitting spark,
 Give me to know the purpose dark
 That aimed thy hand with murderous knife
 Against offenceless stranger's life ?"—
 —"No stranger thou !" with accent fell,
 Mumbled the wretch, "I know thee well,
 And know thee for the foeman sworn
 Of my high chief, the mighty Lorn"—
 —"Speak yet again, and speak the truth
 For thy soul's sake !—from whence this youth ?
 His country, birth, and name declare,
 And thus one evil deed repair"—
 —"Vex me no more !.. my blood runs cold ..
 No more I know than I have told
 We found him in a bark we sought
 With different purpose and I thought "...
 Fate cut him short ; in blood and broil,
 As he had lived, died Cormac Doil

31. Then resting on his bloody blade,
 The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,
 "Now shame upon us both !—that boy
 Lifts his mute face to heaven,
 And clasps his hands, to testify
 His gratitude to God on high,
 For strange deliverance given
 His speechless gesture thanks hath paid
 Which our feeble tongues have left unsaid"—
 He raised the youth with kindly word,
 But marked him shudder at the sword,
 He cleansed it from its hue of death,
 And plunged the weapon in its sheath
 "Alas, poor child ! unfitting part
 Fate doomed, when with so soft a heart,
 And form so slight as thine,
 She made thee first a pirate's slave,
 Then, in his stead, a prison gave
 Of wretched lot like mine,
 A landless prince, whose wandering life
 Is but one scene of blood and strife—
 Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall be
 But he'll find resting-place for thee—
 Come, noble Ronald ! o'er the dead

Enough thy generous grief is paid,
 And well has Allan's fate been wroke,—
 Come, wend we hence—the day has broke.
 Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
 Was false, that she had hoisted sail”—

- 32 Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
 The Island Lord bade sad farewell
 To Allan — “Who shall tell this tale,
 He said, “in halls of Donrigale’
 Oh, who his widowed mother tell,
 That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell’—
 Rest thee, poor youth! and trust my care,
 I o’er mass and knell and funeral prayer,
 While o’er these cariffs, where they lie,
 The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry!”—
 And now the eastern mountain’s head
 On the dark lake threw lustie red,
 Bright gleams of gold and purple streak
 Ravine and precipice and peak—
 (So earthly power at distance shows,
 Reveals his splendour, hides his woes)
 O’er sheets of granite dark and broad,
 Rent and unequal, lay the road
 In sad discourse the warriors wind,
 And the mute Page moves slow behind

CANTO FOURTH

- 1 STRANGER! if e’er thine ardent step hath traced
 The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
 Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,
 By lake and cataract, her lonely throne,
 Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
 Grazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
 Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thown
 Mingle their echoes with the eagle’s cry,
 And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky
 Yes! ’twas sublime, but sad —The loneliness
 Larded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye,
 And strange and awful fears began to press
 Thy bosom with a stein solemnity
 Then hast thou wished some woodman’s cottage nigh
 Something that showed of life, though low and meagre
 Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy,
 Glad sound its cock’s blithe carol would have been
 Or children whooping wild beneath the willows green
 Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes
 An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
 Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch’s lakes,
 In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise,
 Or farther, where, beneath the northern skies,

Chides wild Loch-Fribol his caverns hoar—
But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dierd shore
That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Conskin roar

2 Through such wild scenes the champions passed,
When bold halloo and bugle-blast
Upon the breeze came loud and fast
“There,” said the Bruce, “blew Edward’s horn !
What can have caused such brief return !
And see, brave Ronald,—see him dart
O’er stock and stone like hunted hart
Precipitate, as is the use,
In war or sport, of Edward Bruce
—He marks us, and his eager cry
Will tell his news ere he be nigh”—

3 Loud Edward shouts, “What make ye here,
Waring upon the mountain deer,
When Scotland wants her King ?
A bark from Lennox crossed our track
With her in speed I hurried back,
These joyful news to bring—
The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
And Douglas wakes his native vale,
Thy storm-tossed fleet hath won its way
With little loss to Biodick-Bay,
And Lennox, with a gallant band,
Waits but thy coming and command
To waft them o’er to Carrick stand
There are blithe news !—but mark the close !
Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
As with his host he northward passed,
Hath on the Borders breathed his last”—

4 Still stood the Bruce—his steady cheek
Was little wont his joy to speak,
But then his colour rose
“Now, Scotland ! shortly shalt thou see,
With God’s high will, thy children free,
And vengeance on thy foes !
Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me Heaven, belongs
My joy o’er Edward’s bier,
I took my knighthood at his hand,
And lordship held of him, and land,
And well may I vouch it here,
That, blot the story from his page
Of Scotland ruined in his rage,
You read a monarch brave and sage,
And to his people dear”—
“Let London’s bughers mourn her Lord,
And Croydon monks his praise record,”
The eager Edward said,

"Eternal as his own, my hate
 Surmounts the bounds of mortal fate,
 And dies not with the dead !
 Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
 When vengeance clenched his praised hand,
 That pointed yet to Scotland's land,
 As his last accents prayed
 Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
 If he one Scottish head should spare
 Lill stretched upon the bloody lair
 Each rebel corpse was laid !
 Such hate was his, when his last breath
 Renounced the peaceful house of death,
 And bade his bones to Scotland's coast
 Be borne by his remorseless host,
 As if his dead and stony eye
 Could still enjoy her misery !
 Such hate was his,—dark, deadly, long,
 Mine,—as enduring, deep, and strong !"—

- 5 "Let women, Edward, war with words,
 With curses monks, but men with swords.
 Nor doubt of living foes, to avenge
 Deepest revenge and deadliest hate.
 Now, to the sea ! behold the beach,
 And see the galleys' pendants stretch
 Then fluttering length down favouring gale !
 Aboard, aboard ! and hoist the sail
 Hold we our way for Arran first,
 Where meet in arms our friends dispersed ;
 Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
 And Boyd the bold in battle fray
 I long the hardy band to head,
 And see once more my standard spread —
 Does noble Ronald share our course,
 Or stay to raise his island force ?"—
 "Come weal, come woe, by Bruce's side,"
 Replied the Chief, "will Ronald bide
 And since two galleys yonder ride,
 Be mine, so please my liege, dismissed
 To wake to arms the clans of Uist,
 And all who hear the Minche's roar,
 On the Long Island's lonely shore
 The nearer Isles, with slight delay,
 Ourselves may summon in our way,
 And soon on Arran's shore shall meet,
 With Torquil's aid, a gallant fleet,
 If aught avails their Chieftain's hest
 Among the islesmen of the west"—

- 6 Thus was their venturous counsel said
 But, ere their sails the galleys spread,
 Coriskin dark and Coolin high

Echoed the dunge's doleful cry ;
 Along that sable lake passed slow,—
 Fit scene for such a sight of woe,—
 The sorrowing islesmen, as they bore
 The murdered Allan to the shore
 At every pause, with dismal shout,
 Their coronach of grief rung out,
 And ever, when they moved again,
 The pipes resumed their clamorous strain,
 And, with the pibroch's shilling wail,
 Mourned the young hen of Donagule
 Round and around, from cliff and cave,
 His answer stern old Coolin gave,
 Till high upon his misty side
 Languished the mournful notes, and died
 For never sounds, by mortal made,
 Attained his high and haggard head,
 That echoes but the tempest's moan,
 Or the deep thunder's rending groan.

- 7 Merrily, merrily, bounds the baul,
 She bounds before the gale,
 The mountain breeze from Ben-na-dairch
 Is joyous in her sail !
 With fluttering sound like laughter hoarse,
 The cords and canvas strain,
 The waves, divided by her force,
 In rippling eddies chased her course,
 As if they laughed again
 Not down the breeze more blithely flew,
 Skimming the wave, the light sea-mew,
 Than that gay galley bore
 Her course upon that favouring wind,
 And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
 And Slapin's caverned shore
 'Twas then that waillike signals wake
 Dunscuth's dark towers and Eisoid's lake,
 And soon from Cavilgarrigh's head
 Thick wreaths of eddying smoke were spread,
 A summons these of war and wrath
 To the brave clans of Sleate and Strath
 And, ready at the sight,
 Each warrior to his weapons sprung,
 And targe upon his shoulder flung,
 Impatient for the fight
 Mac-Kinnon's chief, in warfare gray,
 Had charge to muster their array,
 And guide their barks to Brodick-Bay

- 8 Signal of Ronald's high command,
 A beacon gleamed o'er sea and land,
 From Cannar's tower, that, steep and gray,
 Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.

Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
 To view the turret scathed by time,
 It is a task of doubt and fear
 To aught but goat or mountain deer
 But rest thee on the silver bench,
 And let the aged herdsman teach
 His tale of former day;
 His cur's wild clamour he shall chide,
 And for thy seat by ocean's side,
 His varied plaid display,
 Then tell, with Canna's Chiefdom came,
 In ancient times, a foreign dame
 To yonder turret gray
 Stern was her Lord's suspicious mind,
 Who in so rude a jail confined
 So soft and fair a thrall!
 And oft when moon on ocean slept,
 That lovely lady sate and wept
 Upon the castle-wall,
 And turned her eye to southern climes,
 And thought perchance of happier times,
 And touched her lute by fits, and sung
 Wild ditties in her native tongue
 And still, when on the cliff and bay
 Placid and pale the moonbeams play,
 And every breeze is mute,
 Upon the lone Hebridean's ear
 Steals a strange pleasure mixed with fear,
 While from that cliff he seems to hear
 The murmur of a lute,
 And sounds, as of a captive lone,
 That mourns her woes in tongue unknown—
 Strange is the tale—but all too long
 Already hath it staid the song—
 Yet who may pass them by,
 That crag and tower in ruins gray,
 Not to their hapless tenant pry
 The tribute of a sigh!

- 9 Merrily, merrily, bounds the bark
 O'er the broad ocean driven,
 Her path by Ronin's mountains dark
 The steersman's hand has given
 And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
 Then hunters to the shore,
 And each his ash-bow unbent,
 And gave his pastime o'er,
 And at the Island Lord's command,
 For hunting-spear took warrior's brand
 O'er Scoor-Ligg next a warning light
 Summoned her warriors to the fight,
 A numerous race, ere stern Macleod

O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode,
 When all in vain the ocean gave
 Its refuge to his victims gave.
 The Chief, relentless in his wrath,
 With blazing hearth blockades the path.
 In dense and stifling volumes rolled
 The vapour filled the caverned Hold!
 The warrior-threat, the infant's plam,
 The mother's screams, were heard in vain;
 The vengeful Chief maintains his fires,
 Till in the vault a tube expires!
 The bones which strew that cavern's gloom
 Too well attest their dismal doom

- 10 Merrily, merrily, goes the bark
 On a breeze from the northward fice,
 So shoots through the morning sky the bark,
 Or the swan through the summer sea
 The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
 And Ulva dark and Colonsay,
 And all the group of islets grey
 That guard famed Staffa round
 Then all unknown its columns rose,
 Where dark and undisturbed repose
 The cormorant had found,
 And the shy seal had quiet home,
 And weltered in that wondrous dome,
 Where, as to shame the temples decked
 By skill of earthly architect,
 Nature herself, it seemed, would raise
 A Minster to her Maker's praise!
 Not for a mermer use ascend
 Her columns, or her arches bend,
 Nor of a theme less solemn tells
 That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,
 And still, between each awful pause,
 From the high vault an answer draws,
 In varied tone prolonged and high,
 That mocks the organ's melody
 Nor doth its entrance front in vain
 To old Iona's holy fane,
 That Nature's voice might seem to say,
 "Well hast thou done, frail Child of clay
 Thy humble powers that stately shrine
 Tasked high and hard—but witness mine!"—
- Merrily, merrily, goes the bark,
 Before the gale she bounds,
 So darts the dolphin from the shark,
 Or the deer before the hounds
 They left Loch-Tur on their lee,
 And they awakened the men of the wild Twee,
 And the Chief of the sandy Coll,

They praised not at Columba's isle,
 Though pealed the bells from the holy pile
 With long and measured toll,
 No time for matins or for mass,
 And the sounds of the holy summons pass
 Awry in the billows' roll
 Lochbuie's fierce and warlike Lord
 Their signal saw, and grasped his sword,
 And verdant Ilay called her host,
 And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
 Lord Ronald's call obey,
 And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
 Still rings to Corneveken's roar
 And lonely Colonsay,
 —Scenes sung by him who sings no more!
 His bright and brief career is o'er,
 And mute his tuneful strains,
 Quenched is his lamp of varied lore,
 That loved the light of song to pour,
 A distant and a deadly shore,
 Has Leyden's cold remains!

- 12 Ever the breeze blows merrily,
 But the galley ploughs no more the sea,
 Lest, rounding wild Cantire, they meet
 The southern foemen's watchful fleet,
 They held unwonted way,—
 Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
 Then dragged their bark the isthmus o'er,
 As far as Kilmacconnel's shore,
 Upon the eastern bay,
 It was a wondrous sight to see
 Topmast and pennon glitter free,
 High raised above the greenwood tree,
 As on dry land the galley moves,
 By cliff and copse and alder groves
 Deep import from that selcouth sign
 Did many a mountain Seer divine,
 For ancient legends told the Gael
 That when a royal bark should sail
 O'er Kilmacconnel moss,
 Old Albyn should in fight prevail,
 And every foe should faint and quail
 Before her silver Cross
- 13 Now launched once more, the inland sea
 They furrow with fair augury,
 And steer for Arran's isle,
 The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
 Ben Ghail, "The Mountain of the Wind,"
 Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
 And bade Loch-Ranza smile
 Thither their destined course they drew,

It seemed the isle her monarch knew,
 So brilliant was the landward view,
 The ocean so serene,
 Each puny wave in diamonds rolled,
 O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
 With azure strove and green.
 The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
 Glowed with the tints of evening's hour,
 The beach was silver sheen,
 The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
 And, oft renewed, seemed oft to die,
 With breathless pause between
 O who, with speech of war and woes,
 Would wish to break the soft repose
 Of such enchanting scene!

14. Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks?
 The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,
 The timid look, and down-cast eye,
 And faltering voice, the theme deny
 And good King Robert's brow expressed,
 He pondered o'er some high request,
 As doubtful to approve,
 Yet in his eye and lip the while
 Dwelt the half-pitying glance and smile,
 Which manhood's graver mood beguile,
 When lovers talk of love
 Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled,
 —' And for my bride betrothed,' he said,
 "My Liege has heard the rumour spread
 Of Edith from Artornish fled
 Too hard her fate—I claim no right
 To blame her for her hasty flight,
 Be joy and happiness her lot!—
 But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
 And Lorn recalled his promise plight,
 In the assembled Chieftains' sight —
 When, to fulfil our father's band,
 I proffered all I could—my hand—
 I was repulsed with scorn,
 Mine honour I should ill assert,
 And worse the feelings of my heart,
 If I should play a suitor's part
 Again, to pleasure Lorn!"

- 15 "Young I said," the royal Bruce replied,
 "That question must the Church decide,
 Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
 Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
 The very tie, which she hath broke,
 To thee should still be binding yoke,
 But, for my sister Isabel—
 The mood of woman who can tell?"

I guess the Champion of the Rock
 Victorious in the tourney shock,
 That knight unknown, to whom the prize
 She deilt,—had favour in her eyes;
 But since our brother Nigel's fate,
 Our ruined house and hapless state,
 From worldly joy and hope estranged,
 Much is the hapless mourner changed
 Perchance," here smiled the noble King,
 "This tale may other musings bring
 Soon shall we know—yon mountains hide
 The little convent of Saint Bride,
 There, sent by Edward, she must stay,
 Till fate shall give more prosperous day,
 And thither will I bear thy suit,
 Nor will thine advocate be mute"—

16 As thus they talked in earnest mood,
 That speechless boy beside them stood
 He stooped his head against the mast,
 And bitter sobs came thick and fast,
 A grief that would not be repressed,
 But seemed to burst his youthful breast
 His hands, against his forehead held,
 As if by force his tears repelled,
 But through his fingers, long and slight,
 Fast trilled the drops of crystal bright
 Edward, who walked the deck apart,
 First spied this conflict of the heart
 Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness kind
 He sought to cheer the sorrower's mind,
 By force the slender hand he drew
 From those poor eyes that streamed with dew
 As in his hold the stripling strove,—
 ('I was a rough grasp, though meant in love,)
 Away his tears the warrior swept,
 And bade shame on him that he wept
 "I would to heaven, thy helpless tongue
 Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong!
 For, were he of our crew the best,
 The insult went not unredressed
 Come, cheer thee, thou art now of age
 To be a warrior's gallant-page,
 Thou shalt be mine!—a palfrey fair
 O'er hill and holt my boy shall bear,
 To hold my bow in hunting grove,
 Or speed on errand to my love,
 For well I wot thou wilt not tell
 The temple where my wishes dwell"—

17 Bruce interposed,—"Gay Edward, no,
 I his is no youth to hold thy bow,
 To fill thy goblet, or to bear

Thy message light to lighter lan
 Thou art a pation all too wild
 And thoughtless for this orphan child,
 Seest thou not how apart he steals,
 Keep, lonely couch, and lonely meals?
 I teler by far in yon calm cell
 To tend our sister Isabel,
 With father Augustin to share
 The peace of change of convent prayer,
 Than wander wild adventures through,
 With such a reckless guide as you —
 "I thank, brother!" Edward answered gay,
 "For the high land thy words convey!
 But we may learn some future day,
 If thou or I can this poor boy
 Protect the best, or best employ
 Meanwhile, our vessel nears the strand,
 Launch we the boat, and seek the land" —

- 18 To land King Robert lightly sprung,
 And thrice aloud his bugle rung
 With note prolonged and varied strain,
 Till bold Ben-Ghoul replied again
 Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
 Had in a glen a hart at bay,
 And Lennox cheered the laggard hounds,
 When waked that horn the green-wood bounds
 "It is the foe!" cried Boyd, who came
 In breathless haste with eye on flame,
 "It is the foe! — Each valiant lord
 Flung by his bow, and grasp his sword!"
 "Not so," replied the good Lord James,
 "That blast no English bugle claims
 Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
 Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight
 Dead were my heart, and deaf mine ear,
 If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear!
 Each to Loch-Ranza's margin spring,
 That blast was wended by the King!" —

- 19 Fast to their mates the tidings spread,
 And fast to shore the warriors sped
 Bursting from glen and green wood tree,
 High waked then loyal jubilee!
 Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
 And clasped his hands, and wept aloud
 Veterans of early fields were there,
 Whose helmets pressed their hoary hair,
 Whose swords and axes bore a stain
 From life-blood of the red-haired Dane,
 And boys, whose hands scarce brooked to wield
 The heavy sword or bossy shield
 Men too were there, that bore the scars

Impressed in Albyn's woeful wars,
 At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
 Teyndrum's dread rout, and Methven's flight;
 The might of Douglas there was seen,
 There Lennox with his graceful mien,
 Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded Knight;
 The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light,
 The Heir of murdered De la Haye,
 And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay
 Around their King regained they pressed,
 Wept, shouted, clasped him to their breast,
 And young and old, and serf and lord,
 And he who ne'er unsheathed a sword,
 And he in many a peril tried,
 Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
 And live or die by Bruce's side!

- 20 Oh, War! thou hast thy fierce delight,
 Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright!
 Such gleams, as from thy polished shield
 Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field!
 Such transports wake, severe and high
 Amid the perling conquest-cry,
 Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
 Muster the remnants of a host,
 And as each comrade's name they tell,
 Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
 Knitting stern brow o'er flashing eye
 Vow to avenge them or to die!—
 Warriors!—and where are warriors found,
 If not on martial Britain's ground?
 And who, when waked with note of fire,
 Love more than they the British lyre?—
 Know ye not,—hearts to honour deen!
 That joy, deep thrilling, stern, severe,
 At which the heart strings vibrate high,
 And wake the fountains of the eye?
 And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if trace
 Of tear is on his manly face,
 When, scanty relics of the train
 That hailed at Scone his early reign,
 This patriot band around him hung,
 And to his knees and bosom clung?—
 Blame ye the Bruce?—his brother blamed,
 But shared the weakness, while ashamed,
 With haughty laugh his head he turned,
 And dashed away the tear he scorned

- 21 'Tis morning, and the Convent bell
 Long time had ceased its matin knell,
 Within thy walls, Saint Bride!
 An aged Sister sought the cell
 Assigned to Lady Isabel,

And hurriedly she cried,
 'Haste, gentle Lady, haste—there waits
 A noble stranger at the gates,
 Saint Bride's poor votress ne'er has seen
 A Knight of such a princely mien,
 His errand, as he bade me tell,
 Is with the Lady Isabel—
 'The princess rose,—for on her knee
 Low bent she told her story,—
 "Let him by thee his purpose teach,
 I may not give a stranger speech"—
 "Saint Bride forefend, thou royal Maid!"
 The portress crossed herself, and said,—
 "Not to be prioress might I
 Debate his will, his suit deny"—
 "Has earthly show then, simple fool,
 Power o'er a sister of thy rule,
 And art thou like the worldly train,
 Subdued by splendours light and vain?"—

- 22 "No, Lady! in old eyes like mine,
 Gauds have no glitter gems no shine,
 Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
 One youthful page is all his train
 It is the form, the eye, the word,
 The bearing of that stranger Lord;
 His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
 Built like a castle's battled wall,
 Yet moulded in such just degrees,
 His giant-strength seems lightsome ease,
 Close as the tendrils of the vine
 His locks upon his forehead twine,
 Jet-black, save where some touch of gray
 Has taken the youthful hue away
 Weather and war their rougher trace
 Have left on that majestic face,—
 But 'tis his dignity of eye!
 There, if a suppliant, would I fly,
 Secure, 'mid danger, wrongs, and grief,
 Of sympathy, redress, relief—
 That glance, if guilty, would I dread
 More than the doom that spoke me dead!"—
 "Enough, enough," the princess cried,
 "'Tis Scotland's hope, her joy, her pride!
 To me never front was ne'er assigned
 Such mastery o'er the common mind—
 Bestowed thy high designs to aid,
 How long, O Heaven! how long delayed!
 Haste, Monarch, haste, to introduce
 My darling brother, royal Bruce!"—

- 23 They met like friends who part in pain,
 And meet in doubtful hope again

And mine eye proves that Knight Unknown
 And the brave Island Lord are one —
 Had then his suit been earlier made,
 In his own name, with thee to aid,
 (But that his plighted faith forbade,)
 I know not But thy Page so near?—
 This is no tale for menial's ear ”—

- 26 Still stood that Page, as far apart
 As the small cell would space afford,
 With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
 He leant his weight on Bruce's sword,
 The monarch's mantle too he bore,
 And drew the fold his visage o'er
 “Fear not for him—in murderous strife,”
 Said Bruce, “his warning saved my life;
 Full seldom parts he from my side,
 And in his silence I confide,
 Since he can tell no tale aright —
 He is a boy of gentle strain,
 And I have purposed he shall dwell
 In Augustin the chaplain's cell,
 And wait on thee, my Isabel —
 Mind not his tears, I've seen them flow,
 As in the thaw dissolves the snow
 'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,
 Unfit against the tide to pull,
 And those that with the Bruce would sail
 Must learn to strive with stream and gale
 But forward, gentle Isabel—
 My answer for Lord Ronald tell ’ —

- 27 “This answer be to Ronald given—
 The heart he asks is fixed on heaven.
 My love was like a summer flower,
 That withered in the wintry hour,
 Born but of vanity and pride,
 And with these sunny visions died
 If further press his suit—then say,
 He should his plighted troth obey,
 Troth plighted both with ring and word,
 And sworn on crucifix and sword —
 Oh, shame thee, Robert ! I have seen
 Thou hast a woman's guardian been !
 Even in extremity's dread hour,
 When pressed on thee the Southern power,
 And safety, to all human sight,
 Was only found in rapid flight,
 Thou heardest a wretched female plain
 In agony of travail-pain,
 And thou didst bid thy little band
 Upon the instant turn and stand,
 And dare the worst the foe might do,

Rena than, like a knight untrue,
 Leave to pursuers merciless
 A woman in her last distress —
 And wilt thou now deny thine aid
 To an oppressed and injured maid,
 Even plead for Ronald's perfidy,
 And press his sickle faith on me?—
 So witness Heaven, as true I vow,
 Had I those earthly feelings now,
 Which could my former bosom move
 Ere taught to set its hopes above,
 I'd spurn each proffer he could bring,
 Till at my feet he laid the ring,
 The ring and spousal contract both,
 And full acquittal of his oath,
 By her who brooks his perjured scorn,
 The ill requited Maid of Lorn!"—

With sudden impulse forward spring
 The Page, and on her neck he hung,
 Then, recollected instantly,
 His head he stooped, and bent his knee,
 Kissed twice the hand of Isabel,
 Arose, and sudden left the cell —
 The princess, loosened from his hold
 Blushed angry at his bearing bold,
 But good King Robert cried,
 "Chafe not—by signs he speaks his mind,
 He heard the plan my care designed,
 Nor could his transports hide —
 But, sister, now bethink thee well;
 No easy choice the convent cell,
 Trust, I shall ply no tyrant part,
 Either to force thy hand or heart,
 Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn,
 Or wrong for thee, the Maid of Lorn
 But think,—not long the time has been,
 That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
 And wouldst the ditties best approve,
 That told some lay of hapless love
 Now are thy wishes in thy power,
 And thou art bent on cloister-bower!
 O! if our Edward knew the change,
 How would his busy satire range,
 With many a sarcasm varied still
 On woman's wish, and woman's will!"—

- 29 "Brother, I well believe," she said,
 "Even so would Edward's part be played
 Kindly in heart, in word severe,
 A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
 He holds his humour uncontrolled,
 But thou art of another mould,

Say then to Ronald, as I say
 Unless before my feet he lay
 The ring which bound the faith he swore,
 By Edith freely yielded o'er,
 He moves his suit to me no more
 Nor do I promise, even if now
 He stood absolved of spousal vow,
 That I would change my purpose made
 To shelter me in holy shade —
 Brother, for little space, farewell !
 To other duties warns the bell ' —

- 30 “Lost to the world,” King Robert said,
 When he had left the royal maid,
 “Lost to the world by lot severe,
 O what a gem lies buried here,
 Nipped by misfortune's cruel frost,
 The buds of fair affection lost !—
 But what have I with love to do ?
 Far sterner cares my lot pursue
 —Pent in this isle we may not lie,
 Nor would it long our wants supply
 Right opposite, the mainland towers
 Of my own Turnberry court our powers—
 —Might not my father's beaſman hoar,
 Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,
 Kindle a ſignal-fire, to ſhow
 The time propitious for the blow ?—
 It ſhall be ſo—ſome friend ſhall bear
 Our mandate with deſpatch and care,
 Edward ſhall find the meſſenger
 That fortrefs ours, the iſland fleet
 May on the coaſt of Carrick meet —
 O Scotland ! ſhall it e'er be mine
 To wreak thy wrongs in battle-line,
 To raiſe my victor head, and ſee
 Thy hills, thy dales, thy people free,—
 That glance of bliſs is all I crave,
 Betwixt my labours and my grave !” —
 Then down the hill he ſlowly went,
 Oft pausing on the ſteep deſcent,
 And reached the ſpot where his hold truſt
 Held ruſtic camp upon the plain

CANTO FIFTH

1. ON ſun Loch-Ranza ſteamed the early day,
 Thin wreaths of cottage ſmoke are upward curled,
 From the lone hamlet, which her inland bays
 And circling mountains ſever from the world
 And there the fiſherman his ſail unfurled,
 The goat-herd drove his kids to ſteep Ben Ghail,
 Before the hut the dame her ſpindle twirled,

Courting the sunbeam as she plied her tou,—
 For, wake where'er he may, Man wakes to care and toil
 But other duties called each convent maid,
 Roused by the summons of the moss grown bell.
 Sung were the matins and the mass was said,
 And every sister sought her separate cell,
 Such was the rule, her rosary to tell
 And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer,
 The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell
 Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
 As stooped her gentle head in meek devotion there.

- 2 She raised her eyes, that duty done,
 When glanced upon the pavement stone,
 Gemmed and enchased, a golden ring,
 Bound to a scroll with silken string,
 With few brief words inscribed to tell,
 ' This for the Lady Isabel '
- Within, the writing further bore,—
 " 'Twas with this ring his plight he swore
 With this his promise I restore,
 To her who can the heart command,
 Well may I yield the pledged hand
 And O! for better fortune born,
 Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn
 Her who was Edith once of Lorn!"
- One single flash of glad surprise
 Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes,
 But vanished in the blush of shame,
 That, as its penance, instant came
 ' O thought unworthy of my race!
 Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,
 A moment's throb of joy to own,
 That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown'—
 Thou pledge of vows too well believed,
 Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
 Think not thy lustre here shall gain
 Another heart to hope in vain!
 For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gauz
 Where worldly thoughts are overwied,
 And worldly splendours sink debased"—
 Then by the cross the ring she placed
- 3 Next rose the thought,—its owner far,
 How came it here through bolt and bar?—
 But the dim lattice is ajar—
 She looks abroad—the morning dew
 A light short step had brushed anew,
 And there were foot prints seen
 On the carved buttress rising still,
 Till on the mossy window-sill
 Their track effaced the green
 The ivy twigs were torn and frayed,

As if some climber's steps to aid —
 But who the hardy messenger,
 Whose venturous path these signs infer?—
 "Strange doubts are mine!—Mona, draw nigh,
 —Nought 'scapes old Mona's curious eye—
 What strangers, gentle mother, say,
 Have sought these holy walls to-day?"
 "None, Lady, none of note or name;
 Only your brother's foot-page came,
 At peep of dawn—I prayed him pass
 To chapel where they said the mass,
 But like an arrow he shot by,
 And tears seemed bursting from his eye"

4. The truth at once on Isabel,
 As darted by a sunbeam, fell —
 "'Tis Edith's self!—her speechless woe,
 Her form, her looks, the secret show!
 —Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
 And to my royal brother say,
 I do conjure him seek my cell,
 With that mute page he loves so well"—
 "What! know'st thou not his warlike host
 At break of day has left our coast?
 My old eyes saw them from the tower
 At eve they couched in green-wood bower,
 At dawn a bugle-signal, made
 By their bold Lord, their ranks arrayed,
 Up sprung the spears through bush and tree,
 No time for benedicite!
 Like deer, that, rousing from their lair,
 Just shake the dew-drops from their hair,
 And toss their armed crests aloft,
 Such matins theirs!"—"Good mother, soft—
 Where does my brother bend his way?"—
 "As I have heard, for Brodick-Bay,
 Across the isle—of birks a score
 Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them o'er,
 On sudden news, to Carrick shore"—
 "If such their purpose, deep the need,"
 Said anxious Isabel, "of speed!"
 Call Father Augustin, good dame"—
 The nun obeyed, the Father came
- 5 "Kind Father, hie without delay
 Across the hills to Brodick-Bay!
 This message to the Bruce be given,
 I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,
 That, till he speak with me, he stay!
 Or, if his haste brook no delay,
 That he deliver, on my suit,
 Into thy charge that stripling mute.
 Thus prays his sister Isabel

For craves more than she may tell—
 Away, good father, to the hall,
 That life and death are on thy speckled
 Hilt, cov'ring the sword of peace and war;
 Took he poked stiff and cold as death,
 And, like a palmer, lay by old,
 O'er moss, and ivy, and a sunny dell.

- 6 Heavy and dull the foot of age,
 And rugged was the pilgrim's way,
 But none as there be 'e whose rain
 Might such important business bear
 Through birchen copse he came, where
 Stunted and sapless, the trees stood,
 By many a mountain stream he passed,
 From the tall cliff in tumultuous,
 Dashing to foam their waters of fire,
 And sparkling in the summer sun,
 Round his grey head the wild curls flew
 In many a fearful circle flew.
 O'er charms he passed, a lone fractious
 Craved war, eye and ample sword;
 He crossed his brow beneath the stone
 Where Druids erst heard victims' wail,
 And at the cairns upon the hill,
 O'er many a heathen hero's pile,
 He breathed a time of prayer for those
 Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose
 Beside Macfarlane's Cross he staid,
 There told his hours with the shades,
 And at the stream he thirst allayed,
 Thence onward journeying slowly still,
 As evening closed he reached the hill,
 Where, rising through the woodland green,
 Old Brodick's Gothic towers were seen
 From Hastings, late their English Lord,
 Douglas had won them by the sword
 The sun that sunk behind the isle
 Now tinged them with a parting smile.

- 7 But though the beams of light decay,
 'Twas bustle all in Brodick-Bay
 The Bruce's followers crowded the shore,
 And boats and barges some unmoor,
 Some raise the sail, some seize the oar;
 Their eyes oft turned where glimmered far
 What might have seemed an early star
 On heaven's blue arch, save that its light
 Was all too flickering, fierce, and bright.
 Far distant in the south, the ruy
 Shone pale amid retiring day,
 But as, on Carrick shore,
 Dim seen in outline faintly blue,

The shades of evening closer drew,
 It kindled more and more
 The Monk's slow steps now press the sands,
 And now amid a scene he stands
 Full strange to churchman's eye,
 Warriors, who, arming for the fight,
 Rivet and clasp their harness light,
 And twinkling spears, and axes bright,
 And helmets flashing high,
 Oft, too, with unaccustomed ears,
 A language much unmeet he hears,
 While, hastening all on bound,
 As stormy as the swelling surge
 That mixed its roar, the leaders urge
 Their followers to the ocean verge,
 With many a haughty word

- 8 Through that wild throng the Father passed,
 And reached the Royal Bruce at last
 He leant against a stranded boat
 That the approaching tide must float,
 And counted every rippling wave,
 As higher yet her sides they lave,
 And oft the distant fire he eyed,
 And closer yet his hauberk tied,
 And loosened in its sheath his brand
 Edward and Lennox were at hand,
 Douglas and Ronald had the care
 The soldiers to the barks to share —
 The Monk approached and homage paid,
 "And art thou come," King Robert said,
 "So far to bless us ere we part?" —
 —"My Liege, and with a loyal heart! —
 But other charge I have to tell," —
 And spoke the hest of Isabel
 —"Now by Saint Giles" the monarch cried,
 "This moves me much! — this morning tide,
 I sent the stripling to Saint Bride,
 With my commandment there to bide" —
 —"Thither he came, the portress showed,
 But there, my Liege, made brief abode" —
- 9 "'Twas I," said Edward, "found employ
 Of nobler import for the boy
 Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
 A fitting messenger to find
 To bear thy written mandate o'er
 To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
 I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
 The chapel gate to snatch a mass
 I found the stripling on a tomb
 Low-seated, weeping for the doom
 That gave his youth to convent-gloom

I told my purpose, and his eyes
 Flashed joyful at the glad surprise.
 He bountied to the staff, the sword
 Was spread before a pious prayer,
 And well my chance he held of eyes.
 For, see! the ruddy sign of life,
 That Clifford, with his very own hand,
 Guards carefully over the life of—

- 10 "O wild of thought, and heart of steel!"
 Answered the Monarch, "and a life
 Of such deep duty to the world,
 A mute in orphan and a day!
 Unfit for flight, unfit for strife
 Without a tongue to plead for life!
 Now, verily, right restored to Heaven,
 Edward, my crown I would have given,
 Ere, thrust on such adventure wild
 I perilled thus the help of child"—
 "Offended half, and half submit,"
 "Brother and Liege, of blame he is thine!"
 Edward replied, "I little dreamed
 A stranger messenger, I deemed,
 Might safest seek the head of evil,
 Where all thy squires are laid down dead.
 Noteless his presence sharp his sense
 His imperfection his defence
 If seen, none can his errand guess,
 If told, his words no tale express—
 Methinks, too, yonder heron's shire
 Might expiate greater fault than mine"—
 "Rash," said King Robert, "was the deed—
 But it is done.—Lambert with speed—
 Good Father, say to Isabel
 How this unhappy chance befell,
 If well we thrive on yonder shore,
 Soon shall my cure her page restore
 Our greeting to our sister Lett,
 And think of us in mass and prayer"—

- 11 "Aye!"—said the Priest, "while this poor heart
 Can chalice raise or cross command,
 While my old voice has accents' use
 Can Augustin forget the Bruce?"—
 Then to his side Lord Ronald pressed
 And whispered, "Bear thou this request,
 That when by Bruce's side I fight
 For Scotland's crown and freedom's right
 The princess grace her knight to bear
 Some token of her favouring care,
 It shall be shown where England's best
 May shrink to see it on my crest
 And for the boy—since weightier care

For royal Bruce the times prepare,
 The helpless youth is Ronald's charge,
 His couch my plaid, his fence my targe
 He ceased, for many an eager hand
 Had urged the barges from the strand
 Then number was a score and ten,
 They bore thrice three-score chosen men
 With such small force did Bruce at last
 The die for death or empire cast !

- 12 Now on the darkening main afloat,
 Ready and manned rocks every boat,
 Beneath their oars the ocean's might
 Was dashed to sparks of glimmering light
 Faint and more faint, as off they bore,
 Their armour glanced against the shore,
 And, mingled with the dashing tide,
 Their murmuring voices distant died —
 "God speed them !" said the Priest, as dark
 On distant billows glides each bark,
 "O Heaven ! when swords for freedom shine,
 And monarch's right, the cause is thine !
 Edge doubly every patriot blow !
 Beat down the banners of the foe !
 And be it to the Nations known,
 That Victory is from God alone !" —
 As up the hill his path he drew,
 He turned his blessings to renew,
 Oft turned, till on the darkened coast
 All traces of their course were lost,
 Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
 To shelter for the evening hour

- 13 In night the fairy prospects sink,
 Where Cumray's isles with verdant link
 Close the fair entrance of the Clyde,
 The woods of Bute, no more descried,
 Are gone — and on the placid sea
 The rowers plied their task with glee,
 While hands that knightly lances bore
 Impatient aid the labouring oar
 The half-faced moon shone dim and pale,
 And glanced against the whitened sail,
 But on that ruddy beacon-light
 Each steersman kept the helm aright,
 And oft, for such the King's command,
 That all at once might reach the strand,
 From boat to boat loud shout and hail
 Warned them to crowd or slacken sail
 South and by west the armada bore,
 And near at length the Carrick shore
 As less and less the distance grows,
 High and more high the beacon rose,

The light, that seemed a twinkling star,
 Now blazed portentous, fierce, and far
 Dark-red the heaven above it glowed,
 Dark-red the sea beneath it flowed,
 Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
 In blood-red light her islets swim,
 Wild scream the dazzled sea fowl gave,
 Drooped from their crags on plashing wave;
 The deer to distant covert drew,
 The black-cock deemed it day, and crew
 Like some tall castle given to flame,
 O'er half the land the lustre came
 "Now, good my Liege, and brother sage,
 What think ye of mine elfin page?"—
 "Row on!" the noble King replied,
 "We'll learn the truth whate'er betide,
 Yet sure the beadsman and the child
 Could ne'er have waked that beacon wild"—

- 14 With that the boats approached the land,
 But Edward's grounded on the sand;
 The eager knight leaped in the sea
 Waist-deep, and first on shore was he
 Though every barge's hardy hand
 Contended which should gain the land,
 When that strange light, which, seen afar,
 Seemed steady as the polar star,
 Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
 Seemed travelling the realms of air
 Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows,
 As that portentous meteor rose,
 Helm, axe, and falchion glittered bright,
 And in the red and dusky light
 His comrade's face each warrior saw,
 Nor marvelled it was pale with awe
 Then high in air the beams were lost,
 And darkness sunk upon the coast—
 Ronald to Heaven a prayer addressed,
 And Douglas crossed his dauntless breast,
 "Saint James protect us!" Lennox cried
 But reckless Edward spoke aside,
 "Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in that flame
 Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
 Or would thy dauntless heart endure
 Once more to make assurance sure?"—
 "Hush!" said the Bruce, "we soon shall know
 If this be sorcerer's empty show,
 Or stratagem of southern foe
 The moon shines out—upon the sand
 Let every leader rank his band"—
- 15 I nully the moon's pale beams supply
 That ruddy light's unnatural dye,

The dubious cold reflection lay
 On the wet sands and quiet bay
 Beneath the rocks King Robert drew
 His scattered files to order due,
 Till shield compact and serried spear
 In the cool light shone blue and clear
 Then down a path that sought the tide,
 That speechless page was seen to glide,
 He knelt him lowly on the sand,
 And gave a scroll to Robert's hand
 "A torch," the Monarch cried, "What, ho!
 Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings know"—
 But evil news the letters bare,
 The Clifford's force was strong and ware,
 Augmented, too, that very morn,
 By mountaineers who came with Lorn
 Long harrowed by oppressor's hand,
 Courage and faith had fled the land,
 And over Carrick, dark and deep,
 Had sunk dejection's non sleep—
 Cuthbert had seen that beacon-flame,
 Unwitting from what source it came
 Doubtful of perilous event,
 Edward's mute messenger he sent,
 If Bruce deceived should venture o'er,
 To warn him from the fatal shore

- 16 As round the torch the leaders crowd,
 Bruce read these chilling news aloud
 "What counsel, nobles, have we now?"—
 To ambush us in green-wood bough,
 And take the chance which fate may send
 To bring our enterprise to end,
 Or shall we turn us to the main
 As exiles, and embark again?"—
 Answered fierce Edward, "Hap what may
 In Carrick, Carrick's Lord must stay
 I would not minstrels told the tale,
 Wild-fire or meteor made us quarrel."—
 Answered the Douglas, "If my liege
 May win yon walls by storm or siege,
 Then were each brave and patriot heart
 Kindled of new for loyal part"—
 Answered Lord Ronald, "Not for shame
 Would I that aged Torquil came,
 And found, for all our empty boast,
 Without a blow we fled the coast
 I will not credit that this land,
 So famed for warlike heart and hand,
 The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
 Will long with tyrants hold a truce"—
 "Prove we our fate—the brunt we'll bide!"

So Boyd and Hay and Lennox cried,
 So said, so vowed, the leaders all,
 So Bruce resolved "And in my hall,
 Since the bold Southern make their home
 The hour of payment soon shall come,
 When, with a rough and rugged host,
 Clifford may reckon to his cost
 Meantime, through well-known bosh and dell,
 I'll lead where we may shelter well"—

- 17 Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
 Whose fury glow beguiled their sight?—
 It ne'er was known—yet gray-haired eld
 A superstitious credence held,
 That never did a mortal hand
 Wake its broad glare on Carrick strand,
 Nay, and that on the self same night
 When Bruce crossed o'er, still gleams the light.
 Yearly it gleams o'er mount and moor,
 And glittering wave and crimsoned shore—
 But whether beam celestial, lent
 By Heaven to aid the King's descent,
 Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
 To lure him to defeat and death,
 Or were it but some meteor strange,
 Of such as oft through midnight range,
 Startling the traveller late and lone,
 I know not—and it ne'er was known.

- 18 Now up the rocky pass they drew,
 And Ronald, to his promise true,
 Still made his arm the stripling's stay,
 To aid him on the rugged way
 "Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
 Why throbs that silly heart of thine?"—
 —That name the pirates to their slave,
 (In Gaelic 'tis the Changeling) gave—
 "Dost thou not rest thee on my arm?
 Do not my plaid-folds hold thee warm?
 Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
 This targe for thee and me supplied?
 Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
 And, trembler, canst thou terror feel?
 Cheer thee, and still that throbbing heart,
 From Ronald's guard thou shalt not part"—
 —O' many a shaft, at random sent,
 Finds mark the archer little meant!
 And many a word, at random spoken,
 May soothe or wound a heart that's broken!
 Half soothed, half grieved, half terrified,
 Close drew the page to Ronald's side,
 A wild delirious thrill of joy
 Was in that hour of agony,

As up the steepy pass he strove,
Fru, toil, and sorrow, lost in love !

- 19 The barrier of that iron shore,
The rock's steep ledge, is now climbed o'er
And from the castle's distant wall,
From tower to tower the warders call
The sound swings over land and sea,
And marks a watchful enemy —
They gained the Chase, a wide domain,
Left for the Castle's sylvan reign
Seek not the scene—the ave, the plough,
The boor's dull fence, have marred it now
But then, soft swept in velvet green
The plain with many a glade between,
Whose tangled alleys far invade
The depth of the brown forest shade
Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
Fair shelter for the sportive fawn,
There, tufted close with copse-wood green,
Was many a swelling hillock seen,
And all around was verdure meet
For pressure of the fumes' feet
The glossy holly loved the park,
The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
And many an old oak, worn and bare,
With all its shivered boughs, was there
Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
On lawn and hillock, glade and dell
The gallant Monarch sighed to see
These glades so loved in childhood free,
Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
He ranged beneath the forest bough

- 20 Fast o'er the moon-light Chase they sped,
Well knew the band that measured tread
When, in retreat or in advance,
The armed warriors move at once,
And evil were the luck, if down
Descended them on the open lawn
Copses they traverse, brooks they cross,
Strain up the bank and o'er the moss
From the exhausted page's brow
Cold drops of toil are streaming now,
With effort furt and lengthened pause
His weary step the stripling draws
“Nay, droop not yet !” the warrior said,
“Come, let me give thee ease and aid !
Strong are mine arms, and little care
A weight so slight as thine to bear —
What ! wilt thou not?—capricious boy !—
Then thine own limbs and strength employ.
Pass but this night, and pass thy care,

I'll place thee with a lady fair,
 Where thou shalt tune thy lute to tell
 How Ronald loves fair Isabel!"—
 Worn out, disheartened, and dismayed,
 Here Amadine let go the plaid,
 His trembling limbs their aid refuse,
 He sunk among the midnight dew!

- 21 What may be done?—the night is gone—
 The Bruce's band moves swiftly on—
 Eternal shame, if at the brunt
 Lord Ronald grace not battle's front!—
 "See yonder oak, within whose trunk
 Decry a darkened cell hath sunk.
 Enter, and rest thee there a space,
 Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy face
 I will not be, believe me, far,
 But must not quit the ranks of war
 Well will I mark the bosky bourn,
 And soon, to guard thee hence, return.—
 Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy!
 But sleep in peace, and wake in joy!"—
 In sylvan lodging close bestowed,
 He placed the page, and onward strode
 With strength put forth, o'er moss and brook,
 And soon the marching band o'ertook
- 22 Thus strangely left, long sobbed and wept
 The page, till, wearied out, he slept—
 A rough voice waked his dream—"Nay, here,
 Here by this thicket, passed the deer—
 Beneath that oak old Ryno stayed—
 What have we here?—a Scottish plaid,
 And in its folds a stripling hid?
 Come forth! thy name and business tell!
 What, silent?—then I guess thee well,
 The spy that sought old Cuthbert's cell,
 Wasted from Arran yester morn—
 Come, comrades, we will straight return
 Our Lord may choose the rack should teach
 To this young lurcher use of speech
 Thy bow string, till I bind him fast!"—
 "Nay, but he weeps and stands aghast,
 Unbound we'll lead him, fear it not,
 'Tis a fair stripling, though a Scot!"—
 The hunters to the castle sped,
 And there the hapless captive led
- 23 Stout Clifford in the castle-court
 Prepared him for the morning sport
 And now with Lorn held deep discourse,
 Now gave command for hound and horse
 War-steeds and palfreys pawed the ground,
 And many a deer-dog howled around.

To Amadine, Lorn's well-known word
 Replying to that Southern Lord,
 Mixed with this clanging din, might seem
 The phantasm of a fevered dream
 The tone upon his ringing ears
 Came like the sounds which fancy hears,
 When in rude waves or roaring winds
 Some words of woe the musier finds,
 Until more loudly and more near,
 Then speech arrests the page's ear

- 24 "And was she thus," said Clifford, "lost?
 The priest should rue it to his cost!
 What says the Monk?"—"The holy Sine
 Owns, that, in masquer's quaint attire,
 She sought his skiff, disguised, unknown
 To all except to him alone
 But, says the priest, a bark from Lorn
 Laid them aboard that very morn,
 And pirates seized her for their prey
 He proffered ransom gold to pay,
 And they agreed—but, ere told o'er,
 The winds blow loud, the billows roar,
 They severed, and they met no more
 He deems—such tempest vexed the coast—
 Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost
 —So let it be, with the disgrace
 And scandal of her lofty race!
 Thrice better she had ne'er been born
 Than brought her infamy on Lorn!"—
- 25 Lord Clifford now the captive spied,—
 "Whom, Herbert, hast thou there?" he cried.
 "A spy we seized within the Chase,
 A hollow oak his lurking-place."
 "What tidings can the youth afford?"—
 "He plays the mute"—"Then noose a cord—
 Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
 For his plaid's sake"—"Clan-Colla's loom,"
 Said Lorn, whose careless glances trace
 Rather the vesture than the face,
 "Clan-Colla's dames such tartans twine,
 Weirer nor plaid claims care of mine
 Give him, if my advice you crave,
 His own scathed oak, and let him wave
 In air, unless, by terror wrung,
 A frank confession find his tongue—
 Nor shall he die without his rite,
 —Thou Angus Roy, attend the sight,
 And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy breath,
 As they convey him to his death"—
 "O brother! cruel to the last!"—
 Through the poor captive's bosom passed

The thought, but, to his purpose true,
He said not, though he sighed, "Adieu!"

- 26 And will he keep his purpose still,
In sight of that last closing ill,
When one poor breath, one single word,
May freedom, safety, life, afford?
Can he resist the instinctive call,
For life that bids us barter all?—
Love, strong as death, his heart hath steel'd,
His nerves hath strung—he will not yield!
Since that poor breath, that little word,
May yield Lord Ronald to the sword—
Clan-Coll's dirge is pealing wide,
The grisly headsmen's by his side,
Along the green-wood Chase they bend,
And now their march has ghastly end!
That old and shattered oak beneath,
They destine for the place of death
—What thoughts are his, while all in vain
His eye for and explores the plain?
What thoughts, while, with a dizzy ear,
He hears the death-prayer muttered near?
And must he die such death accurst,
Or will that bosom secret burst?
Cold on his brow breaks terror's dew,
His trembling lips are livid blue,
The agony of parting life
Has nought to match that moment's strife!
- 27 But other witnesses are nigh,
Who mock at fear, and death defy!
Soon as the dire lament was play'd,
It waked the lurking ambushade
The Island Lord looked forth, and spied
The cause, and loud in fury cried,
"By Heaven they lead the page to die,
And mock me in his agony!
They shall atone it!"—On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp, "They shall not harm
A ringlet of the stripling's hair,
But, till I give the word, forbear
—Douglas, lead fifty of our force
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyers and their Hold
A spear above the copse displayed,
Be signal of the ambush made
—Edward, with forty spearmen, straight
Through yonder copse approach the gate,
And, when thou hear'st the battle din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge—storm the port—

And man and guard the castle-court —
 The rest move slowly forth with me,
 In shelter of the forest tree,
 Till Douglas at his post I see —

- 28 Like war-horse eager to rush on,
 Compelled to wait the signal blown,
 Hid, and scarce hid, by green-wood bough,
 Trembling with rage, stands Ronald now,
 And in his grasp his sword gleams blue,
 Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue —
 Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady eye,
 Sees the dark death-train moving by,
 And heedful measures oft the space
 The Douglas and his band must trace,
 Ere they can reach their destined ground
 Now sinks the dirge's wailing sound,
 Now cluster round the direful tree
 That slow and solemn company,
 While hymn mistuned and muttered prayer
 The victim for his fate prepare —
 What glances o'er the green-wood shade?—
 The spear that marks the ambushade!—
 "Now, noble Chief! I leave thee loose,
 Upon them, Ronald!" said the Bruce

- 29 "The Bruce, the Bruce!" to well-known cry
 His native rocks and woods reply
 "The Bruce, the Bruce!" in that dread word
 The knell of hundred deaths was heard
 The astonished Southern gazed at first,
 Where the wild tempest was to burst,
 That waked in that presaging name
 Before, behind, around it came!
 Half-armed, surprised, on every side
 Hemmed in, hewed down, they bled and died
 Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
 And fierce Clan-Colla's broadsword raged!
 Full soon the few who fought were sped,
 Nor better was their lot who fled,
 And met, 'mid terror's wild career,
 The Douglas's redoubted spear!
 Two hundred yeomen on that morn
 The castle left, and none return

- 30 Not on their flight pressed Ronald's brand,
 A gentler duty claimed his hand
 He raised the page, where on the plain
 His fear had sunk him with the slain
 And twice, that morn, surprise well near
 Betrayed the secret kept by fear
 Once, when, with life returning, came
 To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's name,
 And hardly recollection drowned

The accents in a murmuring sound;
 And once, when he scarce he could hear
 The Conqueror's care to loose the net,
 Drawn tightly o'er his labouring breath,
 But then the Bruce's hupla blew,
 For martial work was yet to do

31. A harder task fierce Edward waits
 Ere signal given, the castle gates
 His fury had assailed,
 Such was his wonted reckless mood,
 Yet desperate valor oft made good,
 Even by its daring, venture true,
 When prudence might have failed.
 Upon the bridge his strength he threw,
 And struck the iron clun in two
 By which its plank was free,
 The warder next his axe's edge
 Struck down upon the threefold ledge,
 'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge!
 The gate they may not close
 Well fought the Southern in the fray,
 Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,
 But stubborn Edward forced his way
 Against a hundred foes
 Loud came the cry, "The Bruce, the Bruce!"
 No hope or in defence or truce,
 Fresh combatants pour in,
 Mad with success, and drunk with gore,
 They drive the struggling foe before,
 And ward on ward they win
 Unspurring was the vengeful sword,
 And limbs were lopped and life blood poured,
 The cry of death and conflict roared,
 And fearful was the din!
 The starting horses plunged and flung,
 Clamoured the dogs till turrets rung,
 Nor sunk the fearful cry,
 Till not a foeman was there found
 Alive, save those who on the ground
 Groined in their agony!
- 32 The valiant Clifford is no more,
 On Ronald's broadsword steamed his gore;
 But better hap had he of Lorn,
 Who, by the foemen backward borne,
 Yet gained with slender trunk the port,
 Where lay his bark beneath the fort,
 And cut the cable loose
 Short were his shrift in that debate,
 That hour of fury and of fate,
 If Lorn encountered Bruce!
 Then long and loud the victor shout



"Unspring was the vengeful sword"

From turret and from tower rung out,
 The rugged vaults replied,
 And from the donjon tower on high,
 The men of Curick may descry
 Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
 Of silver, waving wide !

- 33 The Bruce hath won his father's hall !
 — " Welcome brave friends and comrades all
 Welcome to mirth and joy !
 The first, the last, is welcome here,
 From lord and chieftain, prince and peer,
 To this poor speechless boy
 Great God ! once more my sire's abode
 Is mine—behold the floor I trode
 In tottering infancy !
 And there the vaulted arch, whose sound
 Echoed my joyous shout and bound
 In boyhood, and that rung around
 To youth's unthinking glee !
 O first, to thee, all-gracious Heaven,
 Then to my friends, my thanks be given !"—
 He paused a space, his brow he crossed—
 Then on the board his sword he tossed,
 Yet steaming hot, with Southern gore
 From hilt to point 'twas crimsoned o'er
- 34 " Bring here," he said, " the mazes four,
 My noble fathers loved of yore
 Thrice let them circle round the board,
 The pledge, for Scotland's rights restored !
 And he whose lips shall touch the wine,
 Without a vow as true as mine,
 To hold both lands and life at nought
 Until her freedom shall be bought,—
 Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
 And lasting infamy his lot !
 Sit, gentle friends ! our hour of glee
 Is brief, we'll spend it joyously !
 Blithest of all the sun's bright beams,
 When betwixt storm and storm he gleams
 Well is our country's work begun,
 But more, far more, must yet be done !—
 Speed messengers the country through,
 Arouse old friends, and gather new,
 Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
 Rouse the brave sons of Teviot dale,
 Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
 The fairest forms, the truest hearts !
 Call all, call all ! from Reesdwar path,
 To the wild confines of Cape Wrath,
 Wide let the news through Scotland ring,
 The Northern Eagle claps his wings !"—

CANTO SIXTH

- 1 O WHO, that shared them, ever shall forget
 The emotions of the spirit-rousing time,
 When breathless in the mart the counters met,
 Early and late, at evening and at prime,
 When the loud cannon and the merry chime
 Hailed news on news, as field on field was won,
 When Hope, long doubtful, soared at length sublime,
 And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
 Watched Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun !
 O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid
 A long, long course of darkness, doubts and fears !
 The heart-sick faintness of the hope delayed,
 The waste, the woe, the bloodshed, and the tears,
 That tracked with terror twenty rolling years,
 All was forgot in that blithe jubilee !
 Her down-cast eye even pale Affliction rears,
 To sigh a thankful prayer, amid the glee
 That hailed the Despot's fall, and peace and liberty !
 Such news o'er Scotland's hills triumphant rode,
 When 'gainst the invaders turned the battle's scale,
 When Bruce's banner had victorious flowed
 O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale,
 When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale,
 And fiery Edward routed stout St John,
 When Randolph's war-cry swelled the southern gale,
 And many a fortress, town, and tower was won,
 And I am still sounded forth fresh deeds of glory done
- 2 Blithe tidings flew from Baron's tower,
 To peasant's cot, to forest-hower,
 And waked the solitary cell
 Where lone Saint Bride's recluses dwell
 Princess no more, fair Isabel,
 A votress of the order now,
 Say, did the rule that bid thee wear
 Dim veil and woollen scrupulare,
 And rest thy locks of dark-brown hair,
 That stern and rigid vow,
 Did it condemn the transport high
 Which glistened in thy watery eye
 When minstrel or when palmer told
 Each fresh exploit of Bruce the Bold ?—
 And whose the lovely form, that shares
 Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy prayers ?
 No sister she of convent shade,
 So say these locks in lengthened braid,
 So say the blushes and the sighs,
 The tremours that unbidden rise,
 When, mingled with the Bruce's fame,
 The brave Lord Ronald's praises came

- 3 Believe, his father's castle won,
And his bold enterprise begun,
That Bruce's earliest cares restore
The speechless page to Arran's shore,
Nor think that long the quaint disguise
Concealed her from a sister's eyes;
And sister-like in love they dwell
In that lone convent's silent cell
There Bruce's slow assent allows
Fair Isabel the veil and vows,
And there, her sea's dress regained,
The lovely Maid of Lorn remained,
Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
Resounded with the din of war,
And many a month, and many a day,
In calm seclusion wore away
- 4 These days, these months, to years had worn,
When tidings of high weight were borne
To that lone island's shore,—
Of all the Scottish conquests made
By the first Edward's ruthless blade,
His son returned no more,
Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
Beleaguered by King Robert's powers,
And they took term of truce,
If England's King should not relieve
The siege ere John the Baptist's eve,
To yield them to the Bruce
England was roused—on every side
Courier and post and herald hied,
To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet their Liege,
Prepared to raise fair Stirling's siege,
With buckler, brand, and spear
The term was nigh—they mustered fast,
By beacon and by bugle-blast
Forth marshalled for the field,
There rode each knight of noble name,
There England's hardy vickers came,
The land they trode seemed all on flame,
With banner, blade, and shield!
And not famed England's powers alone,
Renowned in arms, the summons own,
For Neustria's knights obeyed,
Gasconne hath lent her horsemen good,
And Cambria, but of late subdued,
Sent forth her mountain-multitude,
And Connoght poured from waste and wood
Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
Dark Eth O'Connor swayed
- 5 Right to devoted Caledon

The storm of war rolls slowly on,
 With menace deep and dread,
 So the dark clouds, with gathering power,
 Suspend a while the threatened shower,
 Till every peak and summit lower
 Round the pale pilgrim's head
 Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
 King Robert marked the tempest nigh
 Resolved the brunt to bide,
 His royal summons warned the land,
 That all who owned their king's command
 Should instant take the spear and brand,
 To combat at his side
 O who may tell the sons of fame
 That at King Robert's bidding came,
 To battle for the right
 From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
 From Solway-Sands to Marshal's-Moss,
 All banded them for the fight
 Such news the royal courier tells
 Who came to rouse dark Arran's dells,
 But further tidings must the ear
 Of Isabel in secret hear
 These in her cloister walk, next morn
 Thus shared she with the Maid of Lorn

- 6 "My Edith, can I tell how dear
 Our intercourse of hearts sincere
 Hath been to Isabel?—
 Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
 When I must say the words, We part!
 The cheerless convent-cell
 Was not, sweet maiden, made for thee,
 Go thou where thy vocation free
 On happier fortunes sell
 Nor, Edith, judge thyself betrayed,
 I though Robert knows that Lorn's high Maid
 And his poor silent page were one
 Versed in the fickle heart of man,
 Earnest and anxious hath he looked
 How Ronald's heart the message brooked,
 That gave him, with her last farewell,
 The charge of Sister Isabel,
 To think upon thy letter night,
 And keep the faith his promise plight
 Forgive him, for thy sister's sake,
 At first if vain repinnings wake—
 Long since that mood is gone
 Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
 And oft his breach of faith he blames
 Forgive him for thine own!"—

- 7 "No! never to Lord Ronald's bowel

Will I again as paramour"—
 "Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
 Until my final tale be said!—
 The good King Robert would engage
 Edith once more his elfin page,
 By her own heart, and her own eye,
 Her lover's penitence to try—
 Safe in his royal charge, and free,
 Should such thy final purpose be,
 Again unknown to seek the cell,
 And live and die with Isabel"—
 Thus spoke the maid—King Robert's eye
 Might have some glance of policy,
 Dunstaffnage had the monarch t'een,
 And Loth had owned King Robert's reign,
 Her brother had to England fled,
 And there in banishment was dead,
 Ample, through exile, death, and flight,
 O'er tower and land was Edith's right,
 This ample right o'er tower and land
 Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand

- 8 Embarrassed eye and blushing cheek
 Pleasure, and shame, and fear bespeak!
 Yet much the reasoning Edith made,
 "Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
 Who gave such secret, dark and den,
 In council to another's err.
 Why should she leave the peaceful cell?
 How should she part with Isabel?—
 How wear that strange attire agen?—
 How risk herself 'midst martial men?—
 And how be guarded on the way?—
 At least she might entreat delay"—
 Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
 Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
 Reluctant to be thought to move
 At the first call of truant love
- 9 Oh, blame her not!—when zephyrs wake,
 The aspen's trembling leaves must shake,
 When beams the sun through April's shower,
 It needs must bloom, the violet flower,
 And Love, how'er the maiden strice,
 Must with reviving hope revive!
 A thousand soft excuses came
 To plead his cause 'gainst virgin shame
 Pledged by their sues in earliest youth,
 He had her plighted faith and truth—
 Then, 'twas her Liege's strict command,
 And she, beneath his royal hand,
 A ward in person and in land—
 And, last, she was resolved to stay

Only brief space—one little day—
 Close hidden in her safe disguise
 From all, but most from Ronald's eyes—
 But once to see him more!—nor blame
 Her wish—to hear him name her name!—
 Then, to bear back to solitude
 The thought he had his falsehood rued!
 But Isabel, who long had seen
 Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
 And well herself the cause might know,
 Though innocent, of Edith's woe,
 Joyed, generous, that revolving time
 Gave means to expiate the crime
 High glowed her bosom as she said,
 "Well shall her sufferings be repaid!"—
 Now came the parting hour—a band
 From Arran's mountains left the land,
 Their chief, Fitz Louis, had the care
 The speechless Amadine to bear
 To Bruce, with honour, as behoved
 To pay the monarch dearly loved

- 10 The King had deemed the maiden bright
 Should reach him long before the fight,
 But storms and fate her course delay
 It was an eve of battle day,
 When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode
 The landscape like a furnace glowed,
 And far as e'er the eye was borne,
 The lances waved like autumn corn
 In battles four beneath their eye,
 The forces of King Robert lie
 And one below the hill was laid,
 Reserved for rescue and for aid,
 And three, advanced, formed a ward-line,
 'Twixt Bannock's brook and Nimrod's shrine
 Detached was each, yet each so nigh
 As well might mutual aid supply
 Beyond, the Southern host appears,
 A boundless wilderness of spears,
 Whose verge or rear the anxious eye
 Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy
 Thick flashing in the evening beam,
 Glaves, lances, bills, and banners gleam,
 And where the heaven joined with the hill,
 Was distant armour flashing still,
 So wide, so far, the boundless host
 Seemed in the blue horizon lost

- 11 Down from the hill the maiden passed,
 At the wild show of war aghast,
 And traversed first the rearward host,
 Reserved for aid where needed most

The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
 Lennox and Lanark too, were there,
 And all the western land,
 With these the valiant of the Isles
 Beneath their chiefs rank'd their files,
 In many a plumed band
 There, in the centre, proudly raised,
 The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
 And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
 A galley driven by sail and oar
 A wild yet pleasing contrast made
 Warriors in mail and plate arrayed,
 With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
 By these Hebrideans worn,
 But O ! unseen for three long years,
 Deu was the garb of mountaineers
 To the fair Maid of Lorn !
 For one she looked—but he was far
 Busied amid the ranks of war—
 Yet with affection's troubled eye
 She mark'd his banner boldly fly,
 Gave on the countless foe a glance,
 And thought on battle's desperate chance

- 12 To centre of the vaward line
 Fitz-Louis guided Amadine
 Aim'd all on foot, that host appears
 A serried mass of glimmering spears
 There stood the Marchers' warlike band
 The warriors there of Lodon's land,
 Litricke and Liddel bent the bow,
 A band of archers fierce, though few,
 The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
 And the bold Spears of Teviotdale,—
 The dauntless Douglas these obey,
 And the young Stuart's gentle sway
 North-eastward by Saint Ninian's shrine,
 Beneath fierce Randolph's charge, combine
 The warriors whom the hardy North
 From Try to Sutherland sent forth
 The rest of Scotland's war-array
 With Edward Bruce to westward lay,
 Where Bannock, with his broken bank
 And deep ravine, protects their flank
 Behind them, screened by sheltering wood,
 The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal, stood
 His men-at-arms bear mace and lance,
 And plumes that wave, and helms that glance
 Thus far divided by the King,
 Centre, and right, and left-ward wing,
 Composed his front, nor distant far
 Was strong reserve to aid the war

And 'twas to front of this array
Her guide and Edith made their way

- 13 Here must they pause, for, in advance
As far as one might pitch a lance,
The Monarch rode along the van,
The foe's approaching force to scan,
His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts to change
Alone he rode—from head to heel
Sheathed in his ready arms of steel,
Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
But, till more near the shock of fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light
A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel basinet,
And clasped within its glittering twine
Was seen the glove of Argentine,
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing, instead, a battle-axe
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight
Of either host—Three bowshots far,
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their arms a while,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night
Should view the strife, or dawning light

- 14 O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fair,
Was that bright battle-front! for there
Rode England's King and peers
And who, that saw that monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his dreadful doom foretell!
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet
Though light and wondering was his glance,
It flashed at sight of shield and lance
"Know'st thou," he said, "De Argentine,
You knight who marshals thus their line?"—
"The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege I know him well"—
"And shall the audacious traitor brave
The presence where our banners wave?"
"So please my Liege," said Argentine
"Were he but horsed on steed like mine,
I'd give him fan and knightly chance,
I would adventure forth my lance!"—

"In battle-day," the King replied,
 "Nice tourney rules are set aside
 —Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
 Set on him—sweep him from our path!"—
 And, at King Edward's signal, soon
 Dashed from the ranks Sir Henry Boane

- 15 Of Hereford's high blood he came,
 A race renowned for knightly fame
 He turned before his Monarch's eye
 To do some deed of chivalry
 He spurred his steed he couched his lance
 And darted on the Bruce at once.
 —As motionless as rocks, that bide
 The wrath of the advancing tide,
 The Bruce stood fast —Each breast beat high
 And dazzled was each gazing eye—
 The heart had hardly time to think,
 The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
 While on the King, like flash of flame,
 Spurred to full speed the war-horse came!
 The partridge may the falcon mock,
 If that slight palfrey stand the shock—
 But, swerving from the Knight's career
 Just as they met, Bruce shunned the spear
 Onward the baffled warrior bore
 His course—but soon his course was o'er!
 High in his stirrups stood the King
 And gave his battle-axe the swing
 Right on De Boune, the whiles he passed,
 Fell that stern dint—the first—the last!
 Such strength upon the blow was put,
 The helmet crashed like hazel-nut,
 The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
 Was shivered to the gauntlet grasp
 Springs from the blow the startled horse,
 Drops to the plain the lifeless corse,
 —First of that fatal field how soon,
 How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

- 16 One pitying glance the Monarch sped
 Where on the field his foe lay dead,
 Then gently turned his palfrey's head,
 And, pacing back his sober way,
 Slowly he gained his own array
 There round their King the leaders crowd,
 And blame his recklessness aloud,
 That risked 'gunst each adventurous spear
 A life so valued and so dear.
 His broken weapon's shaft surveyed
 The King, and careless answer made,—
 "My loss may pay my folly's tax,
 I've broke my trusty battle-axe!"—

'I was then Fitz-Louis, bending low,
 Did Isabel's communion know
 Edith, disguised, at distance stands
 And hides her blushes with her hand.
 The monarch's brow has changed its hue
 Away the gory axe he threw,
 While to the seeming page he drew,
 Clearing way & terror from his eye.
 Her hand with gentle care he took,
 With such a kind protecting look,
 As to a weak and timid boy
 Might speak that elder brother's care
 And elder brother's love were there

- 17 "Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!"
 Then whispered, "Still that name be thine
 Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
 Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
 And sends thee here in doubtful hour,
 But soon we are beyond her power,
 For on this chosen battle plain,
 Victor or vanquished, I remain
 Do thou to yonder hill repair,
 The followers of our host are there,
 And all who may not weapons bear—
 Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care—
 Joyful we meet, if all go well,
 If not, in Arrin's holy cell
 I thou must take part with Isabel,
 For brave Lord Ronald, too, hath sworn
 Not to regain the Maid of Lorn,
 (The bliss on earth he covets most,)
 Would he forsake his battle post,
 Or shun the fortune that may fall
 To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all—
 But hark! some news these trumpets tell,
 Forgive my haste—farewell—farewell!"
 And in a lower voice he said,
 "Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid!"—
- 18 "What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
 And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
 Our leftward flank?"—the Monarch cried
 To Moray's Earl, who rode beside
 "Lo! round thy station pass the foes!
 Randolph, thy wreath has lost a rose!"—
 The Earl his visor closed, and said,
 "My wreath shall bloom, or life shall fade—
 Follow, my household!"—And they go
 Like lightning on the advancing foe
 "My Liege," said noble Douglas then,
 "Earl Randolph has but one to ten.
 Let me go forth his band to aid!"—

—"Stn not. The erori he hath made,
 Let him amend it as he may,
 I will not weaken mine array"—
 Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,
 And Douglas's brave heart swelled high,—
 "My Liege," he said, "with patient ear
 I must not Moray's death-knell hear!"—
 'Then go, but speed thee back again"—
 Forth sprung the Douglas with his train;
 But, when they won a rising hill,
 He bade his followers hold them still—
 "See, see! the routed Southern fly!
 The Earl hath won the victory
 Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,
 His banner towers above the press
 Rem up, our presence would impan
 The fame we come too late to share"—
 Back to the host the Douglas rode,
 And soon glad tidings are abroad,
 That Dryncourt by stout Randolph slain,
 His followers fled with loosened rein—
 That skumish closed the busy day,
 And couched in battle's prompt array,
 Each army on their weapons lay

- 19 It was a night of lovely June,
 High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
 Demayet smiled beneath her ray,
 Old Stirling's towers rose in light,
 And, twined in links of silver bright,
 Her winding river lay
 Ah, gentle planet! other sight
 Shall greet thee, next returning night,
 Of broken arms and banners toie,
 And marshes dark with human gore,
 And piles of slaughtered men and hoise
 And Foith that floats the frequent corse,
 And many a wounded wretch to plain
 Beneath thy silver light in vain!
 But now, from England's host, the cry
 Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
 While from the Scottish legions pass
 The muffled prayer, the early mass!
 Here numbers had presumption given,
 There, bands o'ermatched sought aid from Heaven
- 20 On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands
 The battle-field, fair Edith stands,
 With serf and page unfit for war,
 To eye the conflict from afar
 O! with what doubtful agony
 She sees the dawning tint the sky!
 Now on the Oculs gleams the sun,

King Edward's he is obey
 De Argentine attends his side,
 With stout De Valence, Pentlake's pride
 Selected champions from the train,
 To wait upon his bridle-rein
 Upon the Scottish foe he eyed—
 —At once, before his sight moved,
 Sunk banner, spear, and shield,
 Each weapon point is downward bent,
 Each warrior to the ground is bent
 "The rebels, Argentine, repent !
 For pardon they have kneeled"—
 "Aye !—but they bend to other powers,
 And other pardon sue than ours !
 See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
 And blesses them with lifted hands !
 Upon the spot where they have kneeled,
 These men will die, or win the field"—
 —"Then prove we if they die or win !
 Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin"—

22 Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
 Just as the Northern ranks arose,

Signal for England's archery
 To halt and bend their bows
 Then stepped each yeoman forth a pace,
 Glanced at the intervening space,
 And raised his left hand high,
 To the right ear the cords they bring—
 —At once ten thousand bowstrings ring,
 Ten thousand arrows fly !
 Nor paused on the devoted Scot
 The ceaseless fury of their shot,
 As fiercely and as fast,
 Forth whistling came the gray-goose wing,
 As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
 Adown December's blast
 Nor mountain target of tough bull-hide,
 Nor Lowland mail, that storm may bide,
 Woe, woe to Scotland's bannered pride,
 If the fell shower may last !
 Upon the right, behind the wood,
 Each by his steed dismounted, stood
 The Scottish chivalry,—
 With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
 Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
 His own keen heart, his eager train,
 Until the archers grimed the plain,
 Then, "Mount, ye gallants free !"
 He cried, and, vaulting from the ground,
 His saddle every horseman found
 On high their glittering crests they toss,
 As springs the wild-fire from the moss,
 The shield hangs down on every breast,
 Each ready lance is in the rest,
 And loud shouts Edward Bruce—
 "Forth, Marshal, on the peasant foe !
 We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
 And cut the bowstring loose !"—

- 23 Then spurs were dashed in chargers' flanks
 They rushed among the archer ranks
 No spears were there the shock to let,
 No stakes to turn the charge were set,
 And how shall yeoman's armour slight
 Stand the long lance and mace of might ?
 Or what may their short swords avail
 'Gainst barbed horse and shut of mail ?
 Amid their ranks the chargers sprung
 High o'er their heads the weapons swung,
 And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
 Gave note of triumph and of rout !
 Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
 Their English hearts the strife made good ;
 Borne down at length on every side,

Maintaining still the stein turmoil,
And to their wild and tortured groan
Each adds new terrors of his own !

- 25 Too strong in courage and in might
Was England yet, to yield the fight
 Her noblest all are here,
Names that to fear were never known,
Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
 And Oxford's famed De Vere
There Gloster plied the bloody sword,
And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
 Bottetourt and Sanzverie,
Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
Names known too well in Scotland's war,
At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
Blazed broader yet in after years,
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers
Pembroke with these, and Argentine,
Brought up the rearward battle-line
With caution o'er the ground they tread,
Slippery with blood and piled with dead,
Till hand to hand in battle set,
The bills with spears and axes met,
And, closing dark on every side
Raged the full contest far and wide
Then was the strength of Douglas tried
Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
And well did Stuart's actions grace
The sire of Scotland's royal race !
 Firmly they kept their ground,
As firmly England onward pressed,
And down went many a noble crest,
And rent was many a valiant breast,
 And Slaughter revelled round

- 26 Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
Unceasing blow by blow was met,
 The groans of those who fell
Were drowned amid the shriller clang,
That from the blades and harness rang,
 And in the battle-yell
Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
Both Southron fierce and hardy Scot,—
And O ! amid that waste of life,
What various motives fired the strife !
The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
The Patriot for his country's claim,
Thus Knight his youthful strength to prove,
And that to win his lady's love,
Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood,
From habit some, or hardness

But russet stern, and soldier good,
 The noble and the brave,
 From various camps the same wild road,
 On the same bloody morning, trod
 To that common, the grave!

- 27 The tug of strife to day began
 Though neither loss yet nor win
 High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust,
 And faster speeds the blow and thrust.
 Douglas leans on his weapon now,
 And Randolph wipes his bloody brow,
 Nor less had toiled each Southern knight
 From morn till mid-day in the fight
 Strong Tregemont for arm and spear,
 Beauchamp in does his visor clasp,
 And Montague must quit his spear,
 And sinks thy falchion, I old De Vere!
 The blows of Berkley full resound,
 And gallant Pembroke's bugle blast
 Hath lost its lively tone,
 Sinks, Argentine, thy battle word,
 And Percy's shout was fainter heard
 "My merry-men fight on!"—

- 28 Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
 The slackening of the storm could spy.
 "One effort more and Scotland's free!
 Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
 Is firm as Ailsa-rock,
 Rush on with Highland's word and target,
 I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge.
 Now, forward to the shock!"—
 At once the spears were forward thrown,
 Against the sun the broadsword's shone,
 The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
 And loud King Robert's voice was heard
 "Carrick, press on—they fall, they fall!
 Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
 The foe is flinching fast!
 Each strike for parent, child and wife,
 For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
 The battle cannot last!"—

- 29 The fresh and desperate onset bore
 The foes three furlongs back and more,
 Leaving their noblest in their gore
 Alone, De Argentine
 Yet bears on high his red cross shield,
 Gathers the relics of the field,
 Renews the ranks where they have reeled
 And still makes good the line
 Brief strife, but fierce, his efforts raise,
 A bright but momentary blaze

Fair Edith heard the Southron shout,
 Beheld them turning from the rout,
 Heard the wild call then trumpets sent
 In notes 'twixt triumph and lament
 That rallying force, combined anew,
 Appeared, in her distracted view,
 To hem the isles-men round,
 "O God! the combat they renew,
 And is no rescue found!
 And ye that look thus tamely on,
 And see your native land o'erthrown,
 O! are your hearts of flesh or stone?"—

- 30 The multitude that watched afar,
 Rejected from the ranks of war,
 Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
 When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right,
 Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
 Old man and stipling, priest and clerk,
 Bondsman and serf, even female hand
 Stretched to the hatchet or the brand,
 But, when mute Amadine they heard
 Give to their zeal his signal-word,
 A frenzy fired the throng,—
 "Portents and miracles impeach
 Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach—
 And he that gives the mute his speech
 Can bid the weak be strong
 To us, as to our lords, are given
 A native earth, a promised heaven,
 To us, as to our lords, belongs
 The vengeance for our nation's wrongs,
 The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warns
 Our breasts as theirs—"To arms, to arms!"—
 To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
 And mimic ensigns high they rear,
 And, like a banneied host afar,
 Bear down on England's wearied war

- 31 Already scattered o'er the plain,
 Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
 The rearward squadrons fled amun,
 Or made but doubtful stay,—
 But when they mark the seeming show
 Of fresh and fierce and marshalled foe,
 The boldest broke array
 O give then hapless prince his due!
 In vain the royal Edward threw
 His person 'mid the spears,
 Cried "Fight!" to terror and despair,
 Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
 And cursed their caiff fears,
 Till Pembroke turned his bridle rein,

And forced him from the fatal plain
 With them rode Argentine, until
 They gained the summit of the hill,
 But quitted there the train —
 "In yonder field a gage I left,—
 I must not live of fame bereft,
 I needs must turn again
 Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace
 The fiery Douglas takes the chase,—
 I know his banner well
 God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
 And many a happier field than this !—
 Once more, my Liege, farewell !"—

- 32 Again he faced the battle-field,—
 Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield
 "Now then," he said, and couched his spear,
 "My course is run, the goal is near,
 One effort more, one brave career,
 Must close this race of mine"
 Then in his stirrups rising high,
 He shouted loud his battle cry,
 "Saint James for Argentine !"
 And, of the bold pursuers, four
 The gallant knight from saddle bore,
 But not unharmed—a lance's point
 Has found his breast-plate's loosened joint,
 An axe has razed his crest,
 Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
 Who pressed the chase with gory sword,
 He rode with spear in rest,
 And through his bloody tartans boied,
 And through his gallant breast.
 Nuled to the earth, the mountaineer
 Yet writhed him up against the spear,
 And swung his broad sword round !
 —Stirrup, steel-boot, and cush gave way,
 Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
 The blood gushed from the wound,
 And the grim Lord of Colonsay
 Hath turned him on the ground,
 And lugged in death-pang, that his blade
 The mortal thrust so well repaid
- 33 Now toiled the Bruce, the battle done,
 To use his conquest boldly won,
 And gave command for horse and spear
 To press the Southron's scattered rear,
 Nor let his broken force combine,
 —When the war cry of Argentine
 Fell faintly on his ear !
 "Save, save his life," he cried, ' O save
 The kind, the noble, and the brave !'—

The squadrons round free passage gave,
 The wounded knight drew new
 He rused his red-cross shield no more,
 Helm, cuish, and breastplate streamed with gore,
 Yet, as he saw the King advance,
 He strove even then to couch his lance—
 The effort was in vain !

The spuri-stroke failed to rouse the horse,
 Wounded and weary, in mid course

He stumbled on the plain
 Then foremost was the generous Bruce
 To raise his head, his helm to loose —

“Lord Earl, the day is thine !
 My Sovereign’s charge, and adverse fate,
 Have made our meeting all too late .

Yet this may Argentine,
 As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
 A Chustan’s mass, a soldier’s grave ”—

34 Bruce pressed his dying hand—its grasp
 Kindly replied, but, in his clasp,
 It stiffened and grew cold—

And, “O farewell !” the victor cried,
 “Of chivalry the flower and pride,

The arm in battle bold,
 The courteous mien, the noble race,
 The stainless faith, the manly face !—
 Bid Nimrūn’s convent light their shrine,
 For late-wake of De Argentine
 O’er better knight on death-bier laid,
 Torch never gleamed nor mass was said !”—

35 Not for De Argentine alone,
 Though Nimrūn’s church these torches shone,
 And rose the death-prayer’s awful tone

That yellow lustre glimmered pale
 On broken plate and bloodied mail,
 Rent crest and shattered coronet,
 Of Baron, Earl, and Banneret,
 And the best names that England knew,
 Claimed in the death-prayer dismal due

Yet mourn not, Land of Fame !
 Though ne’er the leopards on thy shield
 Retreated from so sad a field,

Since Norman William came
 Oft may thine annals justly boast
 Of battles stern by Scotland lost

Grudge not her victory,
 When for her free-born rights she strove,
 Rights dear to all who freedom love,
 To none so dear as thee !

36 Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
 Must from Fitz Louis tidings hear

With him, a hundred voices tell
Of prodigy and miracle,

"For the mute Page had spoke"
"Page!" said Fitz-Louis, "rather say,
An angel sent from realms of day,
To burst the English yoke

I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
When hurrying from the mountain top,
A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,
To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
A step as light upon the green
As if his pinions waved unseen!"—

"Spoke he with none?"—"With none—one word
Burst when he saw the Island Lord,
Returning from the battle field"

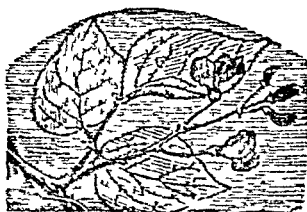
"What answer made the Chief?"—"He kneeled,
Durst not look up, but muttered low
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him 'twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere"—

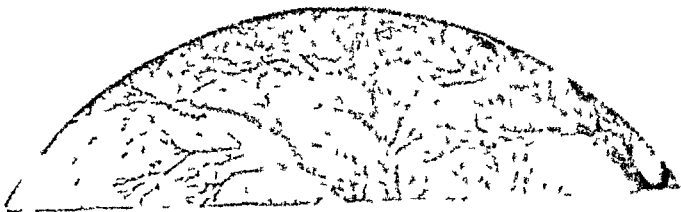
- 37 Even upon Bannock's bloody plain,
Heaped then with thousands of the slain,
'Mid victor monarch's musings high,
Mirth laughed in good King Robert's eye
"And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Ronald kneeled to him?" he said,
"Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the Abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown,
To Cambuskenneth straight he pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay, for high deliverance given,
A nation's thanks to gracious Heaven
Let him array, besides, such state
As should on princes' nuptials wait
Ourselves the cause, through fortune's spite,
That once broke short that spousal rite,
Ourselves will grace, with early morn,
The bridal of the Maid of Lorn"

CONCLUSION

Go forth, my Song, upon thy venturous way,
Go boldly forth, nor yet thy master blame,
Who chose no patron for his humble lay
And graced thy numbers with no friendly name,
Whose partial zeal might smooth thy path to fame.
There was—and O! how many sorrows crowd
Into these two brief words!—*there was* a claim
By generous friendship given—had fate allowed,
It well had bid thee rank the proudest of the proud!

All angel now—yet little less than all,
While still a pilgrim in our world below !
What 'vails it us that patience to recall,
Which hid its own, to soothe all other wor ;
What 'vails to tell how VIRTUE'S purest glow
Shone yet more lovely in a form so fair,—
And, least of all, what 'vails the world should know,
That one poor galand, twined to deck thy hair,
Hung upon thy hearse, to droop and wither there !





BALLADS.

GLENFINLAS, OR, LORD RONALD'S CORONACH

(This ballad first appeared in *Lewis's Tales of Wonder*)

THE simple tradition, upon which the following story is founded, runs thus:—While two Highland hunters were passing the river in a solitary hut (a hut built for the purpose of hunting) and making merry over the venison and whisky, one of them expressed a wish that they had pretty ladies to complete their party. The words were scarcely uttered, when two beautiful young women, habited in green, entered the hut, dancing and singing. One of the hunters was seduced, by the siren who attached herself particularly to him, to leave the hut: the other remained, and suspicious of the fair seducers, continued to play upon a trumpet, or Jew's harp, some strain, consecrated to the Virgin Mary. Day at length came, and the temptress vanished. Searching in the forest, he found the bones of his unfortunate friend, which had been torn to pieces and devoured by the fiend, into whose coils he had fallen. The place was from thence called *The Glen of the Green Women*.

Glenfinlas is a tract of forest ground, lying in the Highlands of Perthshire not far from Callender in Menteith. It was formerly a royal forest, and now belongs to the Earl of Moray. This country, as well as the adjacent district of Balquidder was in times of yore, chiefly inhabited by the Macgregors. To the west of the Forest of Glenfinlas lies Loch Katrine, and a romantic avenue called the Trosachs. Benledi, Benmore, and Benvoirlach, are mountains in the same district, and at no great distance from Glenfinlas. The river Forth passes Callender and the Castle of Doune and joins the Firth near Stirling. The Pass of Lenny is immediately above Callender, and is the principal access to the Highlands from that town. Glenartney is a forest, near Benvoirlach. The whole forms a sublime tract of Alpine scenery.

"For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair,
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless oft, like moody madness, stare,
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare."

"O HONE a rie'! O hone a rie'!"
The pride of Albin's line is o'er,
And fallen Glenartney's stately tree,
We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more!

O, sprung from great Macgillimore,
The chief that never feared a foe,
How matchless was thy broad claymore,
How deadly thine unerring bow!

Well can the Saxon widows tell,
How, on the Teith's resounding shore,

The boldest Lowland warriors fell,
As down from Lenny's pass you bore.

But o'er his hills, on festal day,
How blazed Lord Ronald's Beltane tree,
While youths and maids the light strathspey
So nimbly danced, with Highland glee!

Cheered by the strength of Ronald's shell,
E'en age forgot his tresses hoar,
But now the loud lament we swell,
O ne'er to see Lord Ronald more!

From distant isles a Chieftain came,
The joys of Ronald's halls to find,
And chase with him the dark brown game,
That bounds o'er Albin's hills of wind

'Twas Moy, whom in Columba's isle,
The seer's prophetic spirit found,
As, with a minstrel's fire the while,
He waked his harp's harmonious sound

Full many a spell to him was known,
Which wanderin' spirits shrink to hear,
And many a lay of potent tone,
Was never meant for mortal ear

For there, 'tis said, in mystic mood,
High converse with the dead they hold,
And oft espy the fated shroud
That shall the future corpse enfold

O so it fell, that on a day,
To rouse the red deer from their den,
The chiefs have ta'en their distant way,
And scoured the deep Glenfinlas glen.

No vassals wait their sports to aid,
To watch their safety, deck their board,
Their simple dress, the Highland plaid,
Then trusty guard, the Highland sword

Three summer days, through brake and dell,
Their whistling shafts successful flew,
And still, when dewy evening fell,
The quarry to their hut they drew

In gray Glenfinlas' deepest nook
The solitary cabin stood,
Fast by Moreira's sullen brook,
Which murmurs through that lonely wood.

Soft fell the night, the sky was calm,
When three successive days had flown,
And summer mist in dewy balm
Steeped heathy bank, and mossy stone.

The moon, half hid in silvery flakes,
 Afar her dubious radiance shed,
 Quivering on Katrine's distant lakes
 And resting on Benedir's head

Now in their hut, in social guise,
 Their sylvan fire the chiefs enjoy,
 And pleasure laughs in Ronald's eyes,
 As many a pledge he quaffs to Moy,—

"What lack we here to crown our bliss,
 While thus the pulse of joy beats high?
 What, but fair woman's yielding kiss,
 Her panting breath, and melting eye?

"To chase the deer of yonder shades,
 This morning left their father's pile
 The fairest of our mountain maids,
 The daughters of the proud Glengyle

"Long have I sought sweet Mary's heart,
 And dropped the tear, and heaved the sigh;
 But vain the lover's wily art,
 Beneath a sister's watchful eye

"But thou mayst teach that guardian fair,
 While far with Mary I am flown,
 Of other hearts to cease her care,
 And find it hard to guard her own.

"Touch but thy harp, thou soon shalt see
 The lovely Flora of Glengyle,
 Unmindful of her charge and me,
 Hang on thy notes, 'twixt tear and smile,

"Or, if she choose a melting tale,
 All underneath the green wood bough,
 Will good St Oran's rule prevail,
 Stern huntsman of the rigid brow?"—

"Since Enrick's fight, since Morna's death,
 No more on me shall rapture rise,
 Responsive to the panting breath,
 Or yielding kiss, or melting eyes

"E'en then, when o'er the heath of woe,
 Where sunk my hopes of love and fame,
 I bade my harp's wild wailings flow,
 On me the Seer's sad spirit came

"The last dread curse of angry heaven,
 With ghastly sights and sounds of woe,
 To dash each glimpse of joy, was given —
 The gift, the future ill to know

"The bark thou sawst, yon summer morn,
 So gaily part from Oban's bay,
 My eye beheld her dashed and torn,
 Far on the rocky Colonsay

"Thy Feigus too—thy sister's son,
Thou sawst, with pride, the gallant's power,
As marching 'gainst the Lord of Downe,
He left the skirts of huge Benmore

"Thou only sawst their tartans wave,
As down Benvoirlich's side they wound,
Heardst but the pibroch, answering brave
To many a target clanking round

"I heard the groans, I marked the tears,
I saw the wound his bosom bore,
When on the serried Saxon spears
He poured his clan's resistless roar

"And thou, who bidd'st me think of bliss,
And bidd'st my heart awake to glee,
And court, like thee, the wanton kiss,—
That heart, O Ronald, bleeds for thee !

"I see the death-damps chill thy brow,
I hear thy Warning Spirit cry,
The corpse-lights dance—they're gone, and now . . .
No more is given to gifted eye !"—

"Alone enjoy thy dreary dreams,
Sad prophet of the evil hour !
Say, should we scorn joy's transient beams,
Because to-morrow's storm may lour?

"Or false, or sooth, thy words of woe,
Clangillian's chieftain ne'er shall fear,
His blood shall bound at rapture's glow,
Though doomed to stain the Saxon spear

"E'en now, to meet me in yon dell,
My Mary's buskins brush the dew "
He spoke, nor bade the chief farewell,
But called his dogs, and gay withdrew

Within an hour returned each hound,
In rushed the rousers of the deer,
They howled in melancholy sound,
Then closely couch beside the deer

No Ronald yet, though midnight came,
And sad were Moy's prophetic dreams,
As, bending o'er the dying flame,
He fed the watch-fire's quivering gleams

Sudden the hounds erect then ears
And sudden cease their morning howl,
Close pressed to Moy, they mark their fears
By shivering limbs, and stifled growl

Untouched, the harp began to ring,
As softly, slowly, oped the door,
And shook responsive every string,
As light a footstep pressed the floor

And by the watch fire's glimmering light,
Close by the minstrel's side was seen
A huntress maid, in beauty bright,
All dropping wet her robes of green

All dropping wet her garments seem,
Chilled was her cheek, her bosom bare,
As, bending o'er the dying gleam
She wrung the moisture from her hair

With maiden blush she softly said,
"O gentle huntsman, hast thou seen,
In deep Glenfinlas' moon-light glade,
A lovely maid in vest of green

"With her a chief in Highland pride,
His shoulders bear the hunter's bow,
The mountain dirk adorns his side,
Far on the wind his tartans flow?"

"And who art thou? and who are they?"
All ghastly gazing, Moy replied

"And why, beneath the moon's pale ray,
Dare ye thus roam Glenfinlas' side?"

"Where wild Loch-Katrine pours her tide,
Blue, dark, and deep, round many an isle,
Our father's towers o'erhang her side,
The castle of the bold Glengyle

"To chase the dun Glenfinlas deer,
Our woodland course this morn we bore,
And haply met, while wandering here,
The son of great Macgillianore

"O aid me, then, to seek the pun,
Whom, loitering in the woods, I lost,
Alone, I dare not venture there,
Where walks, they say, the shrieking ghost "

"Yes, many a shrieking ghost walks there,
Then first, my own sad vow to keep,
Here will I pour my midnight prayer,
Which still must rise when mortals sleep "

"O first, for pity's gentle sake
Guide a lone wanderer on her way!
For I must cross the haunted brake,
And reach my father's towers ere day "

"First, three times tell each Ave bead,
And thrice a Pater-noster say,
Then kiss with me the holy reed,
So shall we safely wind our way "

"O shame to knighthood, strange and foul!
Go, doff the bonnet from thy brow,
And shroud thee in the monkish cowl,
Which best befits thy sullen vow.

" Not so, by high Dunlathmon's fire,
Thy heart was froze to love and joy,
When gaily rung thy raptured lyre,
To wanton Morna's melting eye "

Wild stared the Minstrel's eyes of flame,
And high his sable locks arose,
And quick his colour went and came,
As fear and rage alternate rose

" And thou, when by the blazing oak
I lay, to her and love resigned,
Say, rode ye on the eddying smoke,
Or sailed ye on the midnight wind ?

" Not thine a race of mortal blood,
Nor old Glengyle's pretended line,
Thy dame, the Lady of the Flood,
Thy sire, the Monarch of the Mine "

He muttered thrice St Oran's rhyme,
And thrice St Fillan's powerful prayer,
Then turned him to the eastern clime,
And sternly shook his coal-black hair

And, bending o'er his harp, he flung
His wildest witch-notes on the wind,
And loud, and high, and strange, they rung,
As many a magic change they find

Tall waxed the Spirit's altering form,
Till to the roof her stature grew,
Then, mingling with the rising storm,
With one wild yell, away she flew

Rain beats, hail rattles, whirlwinds tear
The slender hut in fragments flew,
But not a lock of Moy's loose hair
Was waved by wind, or wet by dew

Wild mingling with the howling gale,
Loud bursts of ghastly laughter rise,
High o'er the minstrel's head they sail,
And die amid the northern skies.

The voice of thunder shook the wood,
As ceased the more than mortal yell,
And, spattering foul, a shower of blood
Upon the hissing firebrands fell

Next, dropped from high a mangled arm,
The fingers strained a half-drawn blade -
And last, the life-blood streaming warm,
Torn from the trunk, a gasping head

Oft o'er that head, in battling field,
Streamed the proud crest of high Benmore,
That arm the broad claymore could wield,
Which dyed the Teith with Saxon gore

Woe to Moneira's sullen rills!
 Woe to Glenfinlas' dreary glen!
 There never son of Albin's hills
 Shall draw the hunter's shaft agen!

Even the tired pilgrim's burning feet
 At noon shall shun that sheltering den,
 Lest, journeying in their rage, he meet
 The wayward Ladies of the Glen

And we—behind the chieftain's shield,
 No more shall we in safety dwell,
 None leads the people to the field—
 And we the loud lament must swell

O hone a rie! O hone a rie!
 The pride of Albin's line is o'er,
 And fallen Glenartney's stately tree,
 We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more!

THE EVE OF ST JOHN

SMAYLHO'ME, or Smallholm Tower, the scene of the following ballad is situated on the northern boundary of Roxburghshire among a cluster of wild rocks, called Sandiknow Crags. The tower is a high square building surrounded by an outer wall, now ruinous. The circuit of the outer court, being defended, on three sides, by a precipice and morass, is accessible only from the west, by a steep and rocky path. The apartments, as is usual in a Border keep, or fortress, are placed one above another, and communicate by a narrow stair. On the roof are two bartizans, or platforms, for defence or pleasure. The inner door of the tower is wood, the outer an iron gate, the distance between them being nine feet, the thickness, namely, of the wall. From the elevated situation of Smaylho'me Tower, it is seen many miles in every direction. Among the crags by which it is surrounded one, more eminent, is called the *Black's Seat*, and is said to have been the station of a beacon, in the times of war with England. Without the tower court is a ruined chapel. Brotherstone is a heath, in the neighbourhood of Smaylho'me Tower.

This ballad was first printed in Mr Lewis's "Tales of Wonder." The catastrophe of the tale is founded upon a well known Irish tradition. This ancient fortress and its vicinity formed the scene of the Editor's infancy, and seemed to claim from him this attempt to celebrate them in a Border tale.

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
 He spurred his courser on,
 Without stop or stay, down the rocky way
 That leads to Brotherstone

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
 His banner broad to rear,
 He went not 'gainst the English yew
 To lift the Scottish spear

Yet his plate jack was braced, and his helmet was laced,
 And his vunt brace of proof he wore,
 At his saddle girth was a good steel sperthe,
 Full ten pound weight and more

The Baron returned in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour,
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reached his rocky tower

He came not from where Ancram Moor
Ran red with English blood,
Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,
His accoutrements pierced and tore,
His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,—
But it was not English gore

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still,
And he whistled thrice for his little foot-page,
His name was English Will

"Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come hither to my knee,
Thou art young, and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did thy lady do?"

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild Watchfold,
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told

"The bittern clamoured from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill,
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross,
To the eiry Beacon Hill

"I watched her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone,
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burned all alone

"The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an armed Knight
Stood by the lonely flame

"And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there,
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were

"The third night there the sky was fur,
And the mountain blast was still,
As again I watched the secret pair,
On the lonesome Beacon Hill,

"And I heard her name the midnight hour,
 And name this holy eve,
 And say, 'Come this night to thy lady's bower,
 Ask no bold Baron's leave

"He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
 His lady is all alone,
 The door she'll undo to her knight so true,
 On the eve of good St John'

"I cannot come, I must not come,
 I dare not come to thee,
 On the eve of St John I must wander alone
 In thy bower I may not be'

"Now, out on thee, fainthearted knight!
 Thou shouldst not say me nay,
 For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
 Is worth the whole summer's day

"And I'll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall
 not sound,
 And rushes shall be strewed on the stair,
 So, by the black rood-stone, and by holy St John,
 I conjure thee, my love, to be there!

"Though the blood-hound be mute and the rush beneath
 my foot,
 And the warder his bugle should not blow,
 Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,
 And my footstep he would know'

"O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east!
 For to Dryburgh the way he has taken,
 And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
 For the soul of a knight that is slain

"He turned him round, and grimly he frowned,
 Then he laughed right scornfully—
 'He who says the mass rite for the soul of that knight
 May as well say mass for me

"At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power,
 In thy chamber will I be'—
 With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
 And no more did I see"—

Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron's brow,
 From the dark to the blood-red high,

"Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
 For, by Mary, he shall die!"

"His arms shone full bright, in the beacon's red light,
 His plume it was scarlet and blue,
 On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
 And his crest was a branch of the yew"

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me !
For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon-tree "

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord !
For I heard her name his name ,
And that lady bright, she called the knight,
Sir Richard of Coldinghame "

The bold Baron's brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale—

"The grave is deep and dark—and the corpse is stiff and
stark—

So I may not trust thy tale

"Where fur Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drowned the name ,
For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks do sing,
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame !"

He passed the court-gate, and he oped the tower grate,
And he mounted the narrow stair
To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on her wait,
He found his lady fair

That lady sat in mournful mood ,
Looked over hill and vale,
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright !"
"Now hail thou Baron true !
What news, what news, from Ancram fight ?
- What news from the bold Buccleuch ?"

"The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
For many a Southron fell ,
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore
To watch our beacons well "

The lady blushed red, but nothing she said ,
Nor added the Baron a word
Then she stepped down the stair to her chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord

In sleep the lady mourned, and the Baron tossed and turned
And oft to himself he said—

"The worms around him creep, and his bloody grave is
deep .

"It cannot give up the dead !"

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
 The night was well nigh done,
 When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,
 On the eve of good St John.

The lady looked through the chamber fair,
 By the light of a dying flame,
 And she was aware of a knight stood there—
 Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

"Alas! away, away!" she cried,
 "For the holy Virgin's sake!"
 "Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side,
 But, lady, he will not awake

"By Eildon-tree, for long nights three,
 In bloody grave have I lain,
 The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
 But, lady, they are said in vain

"By the Baron's brand, near Tweed's fair strand,
 Most foully slain I fell,
 And my restless sprite on the beacon's height
 For a space is doomed to dwell

"At our trysting-place, for a certain space
 I must wander to and fro,
 But I had not had power to come to thy bower
 Hadst thou not conjured me so "

Love mastered fear—her brow she crossed,
 "How, Richard, hast thou sped?
 And art thou saved, or art thou lost?"
 The Vision shook his head!

"Who spilleth life shall forfeit life,
 So bid thy lord believe
 That lawless love is guilt above,
 This awful sign receive "

He laid his left palm on an orken beam,
 His right upon her hand
 The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
 For it scorched like a fiery brand

The sable score, of fingers four,
 Remains on that board impressed,
 And for evermore that lady wore
 A covering on her wrist

There is a Nun in Dryburgh bower,
 Ne'er looks upon the sun
 There is a Monk in Melrose tower,
 He speaketh word to none

That Nun, who ne'er beholds the day,
 That Monk, who speaks to none—
 That Nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,
 That Monk the bold Baron

CADYOW CASTLE

ADDRESS'D TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LADY ANNE HAMILTON

THE ruins of Cadyow, or Crazow Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family of Hamilton, are situated upon the precipitous banks of the river Erian, about two miles above its junction with the Clyde. The situation of the ruins, embosomed in wood, darkened by ivy and creeping shrubs, and overhanging the brawling torrent, is romantic in the highest degree. In the immediate vicinity of Cadyow is a grove of immense oaks, the remains of the Caledonian Forest, which anciently extended through the south of Scotland, from the Eastern to the Atlantic Ocean. Some of these trees measure twenty five feet, and upwards, in circumference. And the state of decay, in which they now appear, shows that they may have witnessed the rites of the Druids. The whole scenery is included in the magnificent and extensive park of the Duke of Hamilton. In this forest was long preserved the breed of the Scottish wild cattle, until their ferocity led to their extirpation, about forty years ago. Their appearance was beautiful, being milk-white, with black muzzles, horns, and hoofs. The bulls are described by ancient authors as having white manes, but those of latter days had lost that peculiarity, perhaps by intermixture with the tame breed.

In detailing the death of the regent Murray, which is made the subject of the following ballad, it would be injustice to my reader to use other words than those of Dr Robertson, whose account of that memorable event forms a beautiful piece of historical painting.

"Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh was the person who committed this barbarous action. He had been condemned to death soon after the battle of Langside, as we have already related, and owed his life to the regent's clemency. But part of his estate had been bestowed upon one of the regent's favourites, who seized his house, and turned out his wife naked, in a cold night, into the open fields, where, before next morning, she became furiously mad. This injury made a deeper impression on him than the benefit he had received, and from that moment he vowed to be revenged of the regent. Party rage strengthened and inflamed his private resentment. His kinsmen, the Hamiltons, applauded the enterprise. The maxims of that age justified the most desperate course he could take to obtain vengeance. He followed the regent for some time, and watched for an opportunity to strike the blow. He resolved, at last, to wait till his enemy should arrive at Linlithgow, through which he was to pass, in his way from Stirling to Edinburgh. He took his stand in a wooden gallery, which had a window towards the street, spread a feather bed on the floor, to hide the noise of his feet from being heard, hung up a black cloth behind him, that his shadow might not be observed from without, and, after all this preparation calmly expected the regent's approach, who had lodged, during the night, in a house not far distant. Some indistinct information of the danger which threatened him, had been conveyed to the regent, and he paid so much regard to it that he resolved to return by the same gate through which he had entered, and to fetch a compass round the town. But, as the crowd about the gate was great, and he himself unacquainted with fear, he proceeded directly along the street, and the throng of people obliging him to move very slowly, gave the assassin time to take so true aim, that he shot him, with a single bullet, through the lower part of his belly, and killed the horse of a gentleman, who rode on his other side. His followers instantly endeavoured to break into the house whence the blow had come, but they found the door strongly barricaded, and, before it could be forced open, Hamilton had mounted a fleet horse, which stood ready for him at a back passage, and was got far beyond their reach. The regent died the same night of his wound."—*History of Scotland*, book v.

The Regent died on the 23d of January 1569. Immediately after the murder Bothwellhaugh rode to Hamilton, where he was received in triumph.

WHEN princely Hamilton's abode
Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,
The song went round, the goblet flowed
And revel sped the laughing hours

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,
So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,

And echoed light the dancer's bound,
As mirth and music cheered the hall

But Cadyow's towers, in ruins laid,
And vaults, by ivy mantled o'er,
Thrill to the music of the shade,
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar

Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
And tune my harp of Border frame,
On the wild banks of Evandale

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,
From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst turn,
To draw oblivion's pill aside,
And mark the long-forgotten urn

Then, noble maid ! at thy command,
Again the crumbled halls shall rise,
Lo ! as on Evan's banks we stand,
The past returns—the present flies —

Where with the rock's wood-covered side
Were blended late the ruins green,
Rise turrets in fantastic pride,
And feudal banners flaunt between

Where the rude torrent's brawling course
Was shagged with thorn and tangling sloc,
The ashler buttress braves its force,
And ramparts frown in battled row

'Tis night—the shade of keep and spire
Obscurely dance on Evan's stream,
And on the wave the warder's fire
Is chequering the moonlight beam

Fades slow their light, the east is gray,
The weary warder leaves his tower,
Steeds snort, uncoupled stag-hounds bay,
And merry hunters quit the bower

The drawbridge falls—they hurry out—
Clatters each plank and swinging chain,
As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
Urge the shy steed, and slack the rein

First of his troop, the chief rode on,
His shouting merry-men throng behind,
The steed of princely Hamilton
Was fleetier than the mountain wind

From the thick copse the roebucks bound,
The startled red-deer scuds the plain,
For the hoarse bugle's warrior sound
Has roused their mountain hunts again

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,
 Whose limbs a thousand years have worn,
 What sullen roar comes down the gale,
 And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase
 That roam in woody Caledon,
 Crashing the forest in his race,
 The Mountain Bull comes thundering on

Fierce, on the hunters' quivered band,
 He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,
 Spurns, with black hoof and horn, the sand,
 And tosses high his mane of snow

Aimed well, the chieftain's lance has flown,
 Struggling in blood the savage lies,
 His roar is sunk in hollow groan—
 Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the piper!

'Tis noon—against the knotted oak
 The hunters rest the idle spear,
 Curls through the trees the slender smoke,
 Where yeomen light the woodland cheer

Proudly the chieftain marked his clan,
 On greenwood lap all careless thrown,
 Yet missed his eye the boldest man
 That bore the name of Hamilton

"Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,
 Still wont our weal and woe to share?
 Why comes he not our sport to grace?
 Why shares he not our hunter's fare?"

Stern Claud replied, with darkening face,
 (Gray Pasley's haughty lord was he)
 "At merry feast, or buxom chase,
 No more the warrior shalt thou see

' Few suns have set, since Woodhouselee
 Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets foam,
 When to his hearths, in social glee,
 The war-worn soldier turned him home

"There, wan from her maternal throes,
 His Margaret, beautiful and mild,
 Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
 And peaceful nursed her new-born child

"O change accursed! past are those days,
 False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,
 And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,
 Ascends destruction's volumed flame

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild
 Where mountain Eske through woodland flows,
 Her arms enfold a shadowy child—
 Oh, is it she, the pallid rose?"

"The wildered traveller sees her glide,
And hears her feeble voice with awe—
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murry's pride!
And woe for injured Bothwellhaugh!'"

He ceased—and cries of rage and grief
Burst mingling from the hundred band,
And half rose the kindling chief,
And half unsheathed his Arran brand

But who, o'er bush, o'er stream, and rock,
Rides headlong, with resistless speed,
Whose bloody ponard's frantic stroke
Drives to the leap his jaded steed,

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs glare,
As one some visioned sight thit saw,
Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair?—
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh!

From gory selle, and reeling steed,
Sprung the fierce horseman with a bound
And, reeking from the recent deed,
He dashed his carbine on the ground.

Sternly he spoke—" 'Tis sweet to hear
In good green-wood the bugle blown,
But sweeter to Revenge's ear
To drink a tyrant's dying groan

"Your slaughtered quarry proudly trod,
At dawning morn, o'er dale and down,
But prouder base-born Murry rode
Through old Linlithgow's crowded town

"From the wild Border's humbled side,
In haughty triumph, marched he,
While Knox relaxed his bigot pride,
And smiled, the traitorous pomp to see

"But can stern Power, with all his vaunt,
Or Pomp, with all her courtly glare,
The settled heart of Vengeance daunt
Or change the purpose of Despair?

"With hackbut bent, my secret stand
Dark as the purposed deed, I chose,
And marked, where, mingling in his band,
Trooped Scottish pikes and English bows

"Dark Morton, girt with many a spear,
Murder's foul minion, led the van,
And clashed their broadswords in the rear
The wild Macfarlanes' plaided clan

"Glencarm and stout Parkhead were nigh,
Obsequious at their Regent's rein,
And haggard Lindsay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in vain

"Mid pennoned spears, a steely grove,
Proud Murray's plumage floated high;
Scarcely could his trampling charger move,
So close the minions crowded nigh

"From the raised visor's shade, his eye,
Dark rolling, glanced the ranks along,
And his steel truncheon, waved on high,
Seemed marshalling the iron throng

"But yet his saddened brow confessed
A passing shade of doubt and awe,
Some fiend was whispering in his breast,
'Beware of injured Bothwellhugh!'

"The death-shot parts—the charger springs—
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!—
And Murray's plumed helmet rings—
Rings on the ground, to rise no more

"What joy the raptured youth can feel
To hear her love the loved one tell,
Or he who broaches on his steel
The wolf by whom his infant fell!

"But dearest to my injured eye,
To see in dust proud Murray roll,
And mine was ten times trebled joy
To hear him groan his felon soul

"My Margaret's spectre glided near,
With pride her bleeding victim saw,
And shrieked in his death-deafened ear,
'Remember injured Bothwellhugh!'

"Then speed thee, noble Chatelault!
Spread to the wind thy bannered tree!
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow!—
Murray is fallen, and Scotland free."

Vaults every warrior to his steed,
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim—
"Murray is fallen, and Scotland freed!
Couch, Arran! couch thy spear of flame!"

But, see! the minstrel vision fails—
The glimmering spears are seen no more,
The shouts of war die on the gales,
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar

For the loud bugle, pealing high,
The blackbird whistles down the vale,
And sunk in ivied ruins lie
The bannered towers of Lardale

For chiefs, intent on bloody deed,
And Vengeance, shouting o'er the slain,
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed,
Or graceful guides the silken rein

And long may Peace and Pleasure own
 The mude who list the minstrel's tale,
 Nor e'er a ruder guest be known
 On the fair banks of Iwandle!

THE GRAY BROTHER

A BALLAD

THE tradition, upon which the tale is founded, regards a crime upon the barony of Gilmerton, near Edinburgh in Mid Lothian. The barony was called Gilmerton Grange, was formerly named Burnside, from the following tragic adventure.—The barony of Gilmerton belonged, of yore, to a gentleman named Heron, who had one beautiful daughter. Her only child was seduced by the abbot of Newbottle, a richly-endowed abbey, upon the banks of the South Eske, now a seat of the marquis of Lothian. Heron came to the knowledge of this circumstance, and learned also that the abbot came on the guilty intercourse by the contrivance of the lady's nurse, the mistress of the house of Gilmerton Grange, or Burnside. He formed a resolution of bloody vengeance, undeterred by the supposed sanctity of the clerical character, or by the stronger claims of natural affection. Chosen, therefore, a dark and windy night, when the objects of his vengeance were engaged in a stolen interview, he set fire to a stack of dried thorns and other combustibles which he had caused to be piled against the house, and reduced to a pile of glowing ashes the dwelling, with all its inmates.

The scene with which the ballad opens was suggested by a crime of the same nature in the life of Alexander Peden, one of the wandering and persecuted teachers of the sect of Cameronians, during the reign of Charles II. and that of his successor James II.

THE Pope he was saying the high, high mass,
 All on Saint Peter's day,
 With the power to him given, by the saints in heaven,
 To wash men's sins away

The Pope he was saying the blessed mass,
 And the people kneeled around,
 And from each man's soul his sins did pass,
 As he kissed the holy ground

And all among the crowded throng
 Was still, both limb and tongue,
 While through vaulted roof, and aisles aloof,
 The holy accents rung

At the holiest word, he quivered for fear,
 And faltered in the sound—
 And, when he would the chalice rear,
 He dropped it on the ground

“The breath of one, of evil deed,
 Pollutes our sacred day
 He has no portion in our creed,
 No part in what I say

“A being, whom no blessed word
 To ghostly peace can bring,
 A wretch, at whose approach abhorred
 Recoils each holy thing

‘Up, up, unhappy! haste, arise!
 My adjuration fear!

I charge thee not to stop my voice,
Nor longer tarry here !”

Amid them all a Pilgrim kneeled,
In gown of sackcloth gray
Far journeying from his native field,
He first saw Rome that day

For forty days and nights so drear,
I ween, he had not spoke,
And, save with bread and water clear,
His fast he ne'er had broke

Amid the penitential flock,
Seemed none more bent to pray ;
But, when the Holy Father spoke,
He rose, and went his way

Again unto his native land
His weary course he drew,
To Lothian's fun and fertile strand,
And Pentland's mountains blue

His unblest feet his native seat,
'Mid Eske's fair woods, regain ,
Through woods more fair no stream more sweet
Rolls to the eastern main

And lords to meet the Pilgrim came,
And vassals bent the knee ,
For all 'mid Scotland's chiefs of fame,
Was none more famed than he

And boldly for his country, still,
In battle he had stood,
Aye, e'en when, on the banks of Till,
Her noblest poured their blood

Sweet are the paths, O, passing sweet !
By Eske's fair streams that run,
O'er airy steep, through copsewood deep,
Impervious to the sun

There the rapt poet's step may rove,
And yield the muse the day ,
There Beauty, led by timid Love,
May shun the tell-tale ray ,

From that fan dome, where suit is paid
By blast of bugle free,
To Auchendinny's hazel glade,
And haunted Woodhouselee

Who knows not Melville's beechy grove,
And Roslin's rocky glen,
Dalketh, which all the virtues love,
And classic Hawthornden?

Yet never a path, from day to day,
 The Pilgrim's footstep range,
 Save but the solitary way
 To Burndale's ruined Grange
 A woeful place was that, I ween,
 As sorrow could desire,
 For nodding to the fall was each crumbling wall,
 And the roof was scathed with fire
 It fell upon a summer's eve,
 While on Carnethy's head
 The last faint gleams of the sun's low beams
 Had streaked the gray with red,
 And the convent bell did vespers tell,
 Newbottle's oaks among,
 And mingled with the solemn knell
 Our Lady's evening song
 The heavy knell, the choir's faint swell,
 Came slowly down the wind,
 And on the Pilgrim's ear they fell,
 As his wonted path he did find
 Deep sunk in thought I ween he was,
 Nor ever raised his eye,
 Until he came to that dreary place,
 Which did all in ruins lie
 He gazed on the walls, so scathed with fire,
 With many a bitter groan—
 And there was aware of a Gray Friar,
 Resting him on a stone
 "Now, Christ thee save!" said the Gray Brother;
 "Some pilgrim thou seem'st to be,"
 But in sore amaze did Lord Albert gaze,
 Nor answer again made he
 "O come ye from east, or come ye from west,
 Or bring relics from over the sea,
 Or come ye from the shrine of Saint James the divine,
 Or Saint John of Beverley?"
 "I come not from the shrine of Saint James the divine
 Nor bring relics from over the sea,
 I bring but a curse from our father, the Pope,
 Which for ever will cling to me"
 "Now, woeful pilgrim, say not so!
 But kneel thee down by me,
 And shrive thee so clean of thy devil's sin,
 That absolved thou may'st be"
 "And who art thou, thou Gray Brother,
 That I should shrive to thee,
 When he to whom are given the keys of earth and
 heaven,
 Has no power to pardon me?"

“O I am sent from a distant clime,
 Five thousand miles away,
 And all to resolve a foul, foul crime,
 Done *here* 'twixt night and day ”

The pilgrim kneeled him on the sand,
 And thus began his say—
 When on his neck an ice-cold hand
 Did that Gray Brother lay.

THOMAS THE RHYMER.

IN THREE PARTS

FEW personages are so renowned in tradition as Thomas of Erildoune, known by the appellation of *The Rhymer*. Uniting, or supposed to unite, in his person, the powers of poetical composition and of vaticination, his memory, even after the lapse of five hundred years, is regarded with veneration by his countrymen. To give anything like a certain history of this remarkable man would be indeed difficult, but the curious may derive some satisfaction from the particulars here brought together.

It is agreed on all hands that the residence, and probably the birthplace, of this ancient bard, was Erildoune, a village situated upon the Leader, two miles above its junction with the Tweed. The ruins of an ancient tower are still pointed out as the Rhymer's castle. The uniform tradition bears that his surname was Lermont, or Learmont, and that the appellation of *The Rhymer* was conferred upon him in consequence of his poetical compositions. There remains, nevertheless, some doubt upon the subject.

We are better able to ascertain the period at which Thomas of Erildoune lived, being the latter end of the thirteenth century. I am inclined to place his death a little further back than Mr Pinkerton, who supposes that he was alive in 1300 (*List of Scott's Poets*). It cannot be doubted that Thomas of Erildoune was a remarkable and important person in his own time, since, very shortly after his death, we find him celebrated as a prophet and as a poet. Whether he himself made any pretensions to the first of these characters, or whether it was gratuitously conferred upon him by the credulity of posterity, it seems difficult to decide. If we may believe Mackenzie, Learmont only verified the prophecies delivered by Eliza, an inspired nun of a convent at Haddington. But of this there seems not to be the most distant proof. On the contrary, all ancient authors, who quote the Rhymer's prophecies, uniformly suppose them to have been emitted by himself.

The popular tale bears that Thomas was carried off, at an early age, to the Fairy Land, where he acquired all the knowledge which made him afterwards so famous. After seven years residence, he was permitted to return to the earth, to enlighten and astonish his countrymen by his prophetic powers; still, however, remaining bound to return to his royal mistress, when she should intimate her pleasure. Accordingly, while Thomas was making merry with his friends in the tower of Erildoune, a person came running in, and told, with marks of fear and astonishment, that a hart and hind had left the neighbouring forest, and were, composedly and slowly, parading the street of the village. The prophet instantly arose, left his habitation, and followed the wonderful animals to the forest, whence he was never seen to return. According to the popular belief, he still “drees his weid” in Fairy Land, and is one day expected to revisit earth. In the meanwhile, his memory is held in the most profound respect. The Lildon Tree, from beneath the shade of which he delivered his prophecies, now no longer exists, but the spot is marked by a large stone, called the Lildon Tree Stone. A neighbouring rivulet takes the name of the Bogle Burn (Goblin Brook) from the Rhymer's supernatural visitants.

It seemed to the Editor unpardonable to dismiss a person so important in Border tradition as the Rhymer, without some further notice than a simple commentary upon the following ballad. It is given from a copy, obtained from a lady residing not far from Erildoune, corrected and enlarged by one in Mr Brown's MSS. The former copy, however, as might be expected, is far more

minute as to local description To this old tale the Editor has ventured to add a Second Part, consisting of a kind of cento, from the printed prophecies vulgarly ascribed to the Rhymer, and a Third Part, entirely modern, founded upon the tradition of his having returned with the hart and kind to the Land of Faerie To make his peace with the more severe antiquaries the Editor has prefixed to the Second Part some remarks on Learmont's prophecies

PART FIRST

ANCIENT

TRUE Thomas lay on Hountie bank,
A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e,
And there he saw a ladye bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne,
At ilka tett of her horse's mane,
Hang fifty siller bells and nine

True Thomas, he pulled aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee.—
“All hail, thou mighty queen of heaven!
For thy peer on earth I never did see”

“O no, O no, Thomas,” she said,
“That name does not belong to me;
I am but the queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee

“Harp and carp, Thomas,” she said,
“Harp and carp along with me,
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be”

“Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never danton me”
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree

“Now, ye maun go wi' me,” she said,
“True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me,
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe as my chance to be”

She mounted on her milk-white steed,
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind,
And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind

O they rade on, and farther on,
The steed gaed swifter than the wind,
Until they reached a desart wide,
And living land was left behind

“Light down, light down, now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee
Abide, and rest a little space,
And I will show

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?—
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few inquires

"And see not ye that braid, braid road,
That lies across that lily leven?—
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

"And see not ye that bonny road,
That winds about the fernie brae?—
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae

'But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue
Whatever ye may hear or see,
For, if you speak word in Elfland,
Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie "

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea

It was mirk, mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
And they waded through red blude to the knee
For a' the blude, that's shed on earth,
Runs through the springs o' that countrie

Syne they came on to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree—

"Take this for thy wages, true Thomas,
It will give thee the tongue that can never lie "

"My tongue is mine ain," true Thomas said,
"A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may be

"I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye "

'Now hold thy peace!' the ladye said,
"For, as I say, so must it be "

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green,
And, till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen

PART SECOND

ALTERED FROM ANCIENT PROVERBS

THE prophecies, ascribed to Thomas of Irlaune have been the principal means of securing to him remembrance "amongst the sons of his people." The author of "Sir Ivald" would long ago have joined, in the vale of oblivion, "Clerk of Trينت, who wrote the adventure of 'Scur Givens' " if, by good hap the same current of ideas respecting antiquity, which causes Virgil to be

regarded as a magician by the Lazarini of Naples, had not exalted the bard of Lreildoune to the prophetic character. Perhaps, indeed, he himself affected it during his life. We know, at least, for certain, that a belief in his supernatural knowledge was current soon after his death. His prophecies are alluded to by Barbour, by Winton, and by Henry the Minstrel, or *Blind Harry*, as he is usually termed. None of these authors, however, give the words of any of the Rhymer's vaticinations, but merely narrate, historically, his having predicted the events of which they speak. The earliest of the prophecies ascribed to him, which is now extant, is quoted by Mr Pinkerton from a MS. It is supposed to be a response from Thomas of Ercildoune to a question from the hermit countess of March, renowned for the defence of the Castle of Dunbar against the English, and termed, in the familiar dialect of her time, *Black Arnes* of Dunbar. This prophecy is remarkable, in so far as it bears very little resemblance to any verses published in the printed copy of the Rhymer's supposed prophecies.

Corspatrick (Comes Patrick), earl of March, but more commonly taking his title from his castle of Dunbar, lately noted part during the wars of Edward I. in Scotland. As Thomas of Ercildoune is said to have delivered to him his famous prophecy of King Alexander's death, the author has chosen to introduce him into the following ballad. All the prophetic verses are selected from Hart's publication.

WHEN seven years were come and gane,
The sun blinked fair on pool and stream,
And Thomas lay on Hunte's bank,
Like one awakened from a dream

He heard the trampling of a steed,
He saw the flash of armour flee,
And he beheld a gallant knight
Come riding down by the Laldon Tree

He was a stalwart knight, and strong,
Of giant make he 'peired to be
He stirred his horse, as he were wode,
Wi' gilded spurs, of faushion free

Says—"Well met, well met, true Thomas!
Some uncouth ferlies show to me"

Says—"Christ thee save, Corspatrick brave!
Thrice welcome, good Dunbar, to me!"

"Light down, light down, Corspatrick brave,
And I will show thee curses three,
Shall gar fair Scotland greet and grane,
And change the green to the black livery

"A storm shall roar, this very hour,
From Rosse's Hills to Solway Sea"

"Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar!
For the sun shines sweet on fould and lea"

He put his hand on the earlie's head,
He showed him a rock, beside the sea,
Where a king lay stiff, beneath his steed,
And steel-dight nobles wiped their e'e

"The neist curse lights on Braxton Hills.
By Flodden's high and heathery side,
Shall wave a banner, red as blude,
And chieftains throng wi' meikle pride

- "A Scottish king shall come full keen;
 The ruddy lion beareth he
 A feathered arrow sharp, I ween,
 Shall make him wink and warre to see
 "When he is bloody, and all to bledde,
 Thus to his men he still shall say—
 'For God's sake, turn ye back again,
 And give yon southern folk a fray'
 Why should I lose the right is mine?
 My doom is not to die this day'
 "Yet turn ye to the eastern hand,
 And woe and wonder ye shall see;
 How forty thousand spearmen stand,
 Where yon rink river meets the sea.
 "There shall the lion lose the gylt,
 And the libbards bear it clean away,
 At Pinkyn Cleuch there shall be spilt
 Much gentil blude that day"
 "Enough, enough, of curse and ban,
 Some blessing show thou now to me,
 Or, by the faith o' my bodie," Corspatrick said,
 "Ye shall rue the day ye e'er saw me!"
 "The first of blessings I shall thee show
 Is by a burn, that's called of bread,
 Where Saxon men shall tine the bow,
 And find their arrows lack the head
 "Beside that brigg, out ower that burn,
 Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
 Shall many a falling courser spurn,
 And knights shall die in battle keen
 "Beside a headless cross of stone,
 The libbards there shall lose the gree,
 The raven shall come, the erne shall go,
 And drink the Saxon blood sae free
 The cross of stone they shall not know,
 So thick the corses there shall be"
 "But tell me now," said brave Dunbar,
 "True Thomas, tell now unto me,
 What man shall rule the isle Britun,
 Even from the north to the southern sea?"
 "A Frenchqueen shall bear the son,
 Shall rule all Britun to the sea,
 He of the Bruce's blood shall come,
 As near as in the ninth degree
 "The waters worship shall his race,
 Likewise the waves of the furthest sea,
 For they shall ride ower ocean wide,
 With hempen bridles, and horse of tree."

PART THIRD

MODEFN

THO THS THE RHYMER was renowned among his contemporaries, as the author of the celebrated romance of "Sir Tristrem." Of this once admired poem only one copy is now known to exist, which is in the Advocates' Library. The Editor, in 1804, published a small edition of this curious work, which, if it does not revive the reputation of the bard of Frecldoune, is at least the earliest specimen of Scottish poetry hitherto published. Some account of this romance has already been given to the world in Mr Ellis's "Specimens of Ancient Poetry," vol. i. p. 165, part iii. 410, a work to which our predecessors and our posterity are alike obliged—the former, for the preservation of the best selected examples of their poetical taste and the latter, for a history of the English language, which will only cease to be interesting with the existence of our mother tongue, and all that genius and learning have recorded in it. It is sufficient here to mention that so great was the reputation of the romance of "Sir Tristrem" that few were thought capable of reciting it after the manner of the author.

The following attempt to commemorate the Rhymers poetical fame, and the traditional account of his marvellous return to Fairy Land, being entirely modern, would have been placed with greater propriety among the class of Modern Ballads, had it not been for its immediate connection with the first and second parts of the same story.

WHEN seven years more had come and gone,

Was war through Scotland spread,
And Ruberslaw showed high Dunyon
His beacon blazing red

Then all by bonny Coldingknow,
Pitched palliouns took their room,
And crested helms, and spears a rowe,
Glanced gaily through the broom.

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
Resounds the ensenzie,
They roused the deer from Caddenhead,
To distant Torwoodlee.

The feast was spread in Ercildoune,
In Learmont's high and ancient hall;
And there were knights of great renown,
And ladies, laced in pall

Nor lacked they, while they sat at dine,
The music nor the tale,
Nor goblets of the blood-red wine,
Nor mantling quaighs of ale.

True Thomas rose, with harp in hand,
When as the feast was done,
(In minstrel strife, in Fairy Land,
The elfin harp he won)

Hushed were the throng, both limb and tongue
And harpers for envy pale,
And armed lords leaned on their swords,
And hearkened to the tale

In numbers high, the witching tale
The prophet poured along,
No after bard might e'er avail
Those numbers to prolong.

Yet fragments of the lofty strain
Float down the tide of years,
As, buoyant on the stormy main,
A pated wreck appears
He sung King Arthur's table round:
The warrior of the lake,
How courteous Gawaine met the wound,
And bled for ladies' sake
But chief, in gentle Tristrem's praise,
The notes melodious swell,
Was none excelled in Arthur's days
The knight of Lionelle
For Marke his cowardly uncle's right
A venomed wound he bore,
When fierce Morholde he slew in fight,
Upon the Irish shore
No art the poison might withstand,
No medicine could be found,
Till lovely Isolde's lily hand
Had probed the rankling wound.
With gentle hand and soothing tongue,
She bore the leech's part;
And, while she o'er his sick-bed hung,
He paid her with his heart
O fatal was the gift, I ween!
For, doomed in evil tide,
The maid must be rude Cornwall's queen,
His cowardly uncle's bride
Their loves, their woes, the gifted bard
In fairy tissue wove,
Where lords, and knights, and ladies bright,
In gay confusion strove
The Gaude Joyeuse, amid the tale,
High reared its glittering head,
And Avalon's enchanted vale
In all its wonders spread
Brangvain was there, and Segramore,
And fiend-born Merlin's gramarye,
Of that famed wizard's mighty lore,
O who could sing but he?
Though many a maze the winning song
In changeful passion led,
Till bent at length the listening throng
O'er Tristrem's dying bed
His ancient wounds their scars expand,
With agony his heart is wrung
O where is Isolde's lily hand,
And where her soothing tongue?

She comes, she comes! — like a flush of flame
 Can lovers' footsteps fly,
 She comes she comes! — the only came
 To see her Tristram die

She saw him die — her latest sigh
 Joined in a kiss his parting breath —
 The gentlest pair that Britain bore
 Until they were in death

There praised the harp, its lingering sound
 Died slowly on the ear,
 The silent guests still bent around,
 For still they seemed to hear

Then woe broke forth in murmur weak
 Nor ladies heaved alone the sigh,
 But, half-ashamed, the rugged cheek
 Did many a gauntlet dry

On Levler's stream, and Learmont's tower,
 The mists of evening close,
 In camp, in castle, or in tower
 Each warrior sought repose

Lord Douglas in his lofty tent,
 Dreamed o'er the woeful tale,
 When footsteps light, across the bent,
 The warrior's ears assail

He starts, he wakes — "What, Richard, ho!
 Arise, my page, arise!
 What venturesome wight, at dead of night,
 Dares step where Douglas lies?"

Then forth they rushed by Leader's tide,
 A selcouth sight they see —
 A hart and hind pace side by side,
 As white as snow on Fairholme

Beneath the moon, with gesture proud,
 They stately move and slow,
 Nor scare they at the gathering crowd,
 Who marvel as they go

To Learmont's tower a message sped,
 As fast as page might run,
 And Thomas started from his bed,
 And soon his clothes did on

First he wore pale, and then wore red,
 Never a word he spake but three, —
 "My sand is run, my thread is spun,
 Thus sign regardeth me"

The elfin harp his neck around,
 In minstrel guise, he hung,
 And on the wind, in doleful sound
 Its dying accents run.

Then forth he went, yet turned him oft
 To view his ancient hall,
 On the gray tower, in lustre soft,
 The autumn moonbeams fall
 And Leader's waves, like silver sheen,
 Danced shimmering in the ray
 In deepening mass, at distance seen,
 Broad Soltra's mountains lay
 "Farewell, my father's ancient tower !
 A long farewell," said he
 "The scene of pleasure, pomp, or power,
 Thou never more shalt be
 "To Learmont's name no foot of earth
 Shall here again belong,
 And on thy hospitable hearth
 The hire shall leave her young.
 "Adieu ! Adieu !" again he cried,
 All as he turned him round—
 "Farewell to Leader's silver tide !
 Farewell to Eicildoune !"

The hart and hind approached the place,
 As lingering yet he stood,
 And there, before Lord Douglas' face,
 With them he crossed the flood
 Lord Douglas leaped on his berry-brown steed,
 And spurred him the Leader o'er,
 But, though he rode with lightning speed,
 He never saw them more
 Some said to hill, and some to glen,
 Their wondrous course had been,
 But ne'er in haunts of living men
 Again was Thomas seen

WAR SONG

OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS

THE following War song was written during the apprehension of an invasion. The corps of volunteers, to which it was addressed, was raised in 1797, consisting of gentlemen, mounted and armed at their own expense. It still subsists, as the Right Troop of the Royal Mid-Lothian Light Cavalry, commanded by the Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas. The noble and constitutional measure of arming freemen in defence of their own rights, was nowhere more successful than in Edinburgh, which furnished a force of 3,000 armed and disciplined volunteers, including a regiment of cavalry, from the city and county, and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns. To such a force above all others, might, in similar circumstances, be applied the exhortation of our ancient Galgacus "*Prou de stur in acien, et majors vestrys et hostes os sigitate*"

To horse ! to horse ! the standard fix
 The bugles sound the call ;
 The Gallic navy stems the seas,

The voice of battle's on the breeze,—
Arouse ye, one and all!

From high Dunedin's towers we come,
A band of brothers true,
Our casques the leopard's spot surround,
With Scotland's hardy thistle crowned,
We boast the red and blue

Though tamely crouch to Gallia's frown
Dull Holland's tardy train,
Their ravished toys though Romans mourn,
Though gallant Switzers vainly spurn,
And, forming, grow the chain,

O! had they marked the avenging call
Their brethren's murder gave,
Disunion ne'er their ranks had mown,
Nor patriot valour, desperate grown,
Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn head,
In Freedom's temple born,
Dress our pale cheek in timid smile,
To hail a master in our isle,
Or brook a victor's scorn?

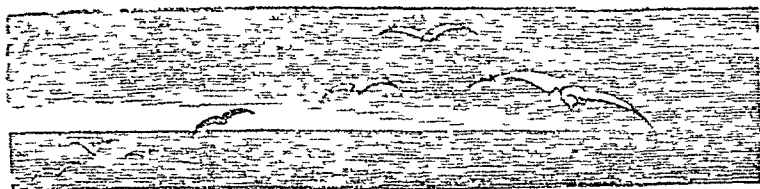
No! though destruction o'er the land
Come pouring as a flood,
The sun, that sees our falling day,
Shall mark our sabres' deadly slay,
And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
Or plunder's bloody gun,
Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard our King, to fence our Law,
Nor shall their edge be vain

If ever breath of British gale
Shall fan the tricolor,
Or footstep of invader rude,
With rapine foul, and red with blood,
Pollute our happy shore,—

Then farewell home! and farewell friends!
Adieu each tender tie!
Resolved, we mingle in the tide,
Where charging squadrons furious ride,
To conquer, or to die

To horse! to horse! the sabres gleam,
High sounds our bugle call,
Combined by honour's sacred tie,
Our word is *Law and Liberty!*
March forward, one and all!



MISCELLANEOUS.

HELVELLYN

IN the spring of 1805, a young gentleman of talents, and of a most amiable disposition, perished by losing his way on the mountain Helvellyn. His remains were not discovered till three months afterwards, when they were found guarded by a faithful terrier-bitch, his constant attendant during frequent solitary rambles through the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

I CLIMBED the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleamed misty and wide,
All was still, save, by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
And starting round me the echoes replied
On the right, Striden edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I marked the sad spot where the wanderer had died

Dark green was that spot 'mid the brown mountain-heather,
Where the Pilgrim of Nature lay stretched in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandoned to weather,
Till the mountain-winds wasted the tenantless clay
Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much-loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill-fox and the raven away

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long nights didst thou number,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, O! was it meet, that,—no requiem read o'er him,
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretched before him,—
Unhonoured the Pilgrim from life should depart?

When a Prince to the fate of the Peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall,
With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are gleaming,
In the proudly riched chapel the banners are beaming,
Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a Chief of the People should fall

But meetest for thee, gentle lover of nature,
 To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,
 When, wildered, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
 And draws his last sob by the side of his dam
 And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
 Thy obsequies sung by the gray plover flying,
 With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
 In the arms of Helvellyn and Catchedicun

THE MAID OF TORO

O, low shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
 And weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
 All as a fair maiden, bewildered in sorrow,
 Soresly sighed to the breezes, and wept to the flood
 "O saints! from the mansions of bliss lowly bending,
 Sweet Virgin! who hearest the suppliant's cry,
 Now grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
 My Henry restore, or let Eleanor die!"—
 All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
 With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fall,
 Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread
 rattle,
 And the chase's wild clamour, came lording the gale
 Breathless she gazed on the woodlands so dreary,
 Slowly approaching a warrior was seen,
 Life's ebbing tide marked his footsteps so wavy,
 Cleft was his helmet, and woe was his mien
 "O, save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying!
 O, save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low!
 Deadly cold on yon heath thy brave Henry is lying
 And fast through the woodland approaches the foe"—
 Scarce could he filter the tidings of sorrow,
 And scarce could she hear them, benumbed with despair
 And when the sun sunk on the sweet lake of Toro,
 For ever he set to the Brave, and the Fair

THE PALMER

"O OPEN the door, some pity to show
 Keen blows the northern wind,
 The glen is white with the drifted snow;
 And the path is hard to find
 "No Outlaw seeks your castle gate,
 From chasing the king's deer,
 Though even an Outlaw's wretched state
 Might claim compassion here
 "A weary Palmer, worn and weak
 I wander for my sin,
 O open, for your lady's sake,
 A pilgrim's blessing win!"

"I'll give you pardons from the pope,
And relics from o'er the sea,—
O, if for these you will not ope,
Yet open for charity

' The hare is crouching in her form,
The hart beside the hind,
An aged man, amid the storm,
No shelter can I find

"You hear the Ettricke's sullen roar,
Dark, deep, and strong is he,
And I must ford the Ettricke o'er,
Unless you pity me

"The iron gate is bolted hard,
At which I knock in vain,
The owner's heart is closer barred,
Who hears me thus complain

' Farewell, farewell ' and Mary grant,
When old and frail you be,
You never may the shelter want,
That's now denied to me "

Till Ranger on his couch lay warm,
And heard him plead in vain,
But oft amid December's storm,
He'll hear that voice again

For lo, when, through the vapours dank,
Morn shone on Ettricke fair,
A corpse amid the alders rank,
The Palmer weltered there

WANDERING WILLIE

ALL joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
And climbed the tall vessel to sail yon wide sea,
O weary betide it ! I wandered beside it,
And bann'd it for parting my Willie and me

Far o'er the wave hast thou followed thy fortune ;
Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain,
The kiss of welcome worth twenty at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie again

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were wailing
I sate on the beach wi' the tear in my ee,
And thought o' the bark where my Willie was sailing,
And wished that the tempest could a' blaw on me

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her mooring,
Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest winds roaring,
That ere o'er Inch Keith drove the dark ocean foam

When the lights they did blaze and the guns they did rattle,
And bithie was each heart for the great victory,

In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
 And thy glory itself was scarce comfort to me
 But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
 Of each bold adventure, of every brave scar
 And trust me, I'll smile, though my e'en they may glisten,
 I on sweet after danger's the tale of the war
 And oh how we doubt when there's distance 'twixt lovers,
 When there's nothing to speak to the heart through the e'e
 How often the kindest and warmest prove rovers,
 And the love of the faithfullest ebbs like the sea
 Till, at times, coul' I help it? I pined and I pondered
 If love would chide the notes like the bird on the tree—
 Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may have wandered,
 Enough, thy level heart has been constant to me
 Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea and through channel,
 Hardships and danger despising for fame,
 Furnishing story for glory's bright annal,
 Welcome, my wanderer, to Jeanie and hame
 Enough now thy story in annals of glory
 Has humbled the pride of France, Holland, and Spain,
 No more shalt thou grieve me, no more shalt thou leave me,
 I never will part with my Willie again

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

THERE is a tradition in Tweeddale, that, when Neidpath Castle, near Peebles, was inhabited by the Earls of March, a mutual passion subsisted between a daughter of that noble family and a son of the laird of Tushielaw, in Ettrick Forest. As the alliance was thought unsuitable by her parents, the young man went abroad. During his absence, the lady fell in a consumption, and at length, as the only means of saving her life, her father consented that her lover should be recalled. On the day when he was expected to pass through Peebles, on the road to Tushielaw, the young lady, though much exhausted, caused herself to be carried to the balcony of a house in Peebles belonging to the family, that she might see him as he rode past. Her anxiety and eagerness gave such force to her organs, that she is said to have distinguished his horse's footsteps at an incredible distance. But Tushielaw unprepared for the change in her appearance and not expecting to see her in that place, rode on, without recognizing her, or even slackening his pace. The lady was unable to support the shock, and, after a short struggle, died in the arms of her attendants. There is an incident similar to this traditional tale in Count Hamlet's 'Ticor a Lpinc'.

O LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,
 And lovers' ears in hearing,
 And love, in life's extremity,
 Can lend an hour of cheering
 Disease had been in Mary's bowel,
 And slow decay from mourning,
 Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower,
 To watch her love's returning
 All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
 Her form decayed by pining,
 Till through her wasted hand, at night
 You saw the taper shining

By fits, & sultry hectic hue
 Across her cheek was flying ;
 By fits, so ashy pale she grew
 Her maidens thought her dying
 Yet keenest powers, to see and hear,
 Seemed in her frame residing ;
 Before the watch-dog pricked his ear,
 She heard her lover's riding ,
 Ere scarce a distant form was kenned,
 She knew, and waved, to greet him ;
 And o'er the battlement did bend,
 As on the wing to meet him
 He came—he passed—a heedless gaze,
 As o'er some stranger glancing,
 Her welcome spoke, in faltering phrase,
 Lost in his courser's prancing—
 The castle arch, whose hollow tone
 Returns each whisper spoken,
 Could scarcely catch the feeble moan,
 Which told her heart was broken

THE BARD'S INCANTATION

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1804.
Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register, 1808

THE Forest of Glenmore is drear,
 It is all of black pine, and the dark oak-tree ,
 And the midnight wind, to the mountain deer
 Is whistling the forest lullaby —
 The moon looks through the drifting storm,
 But the troubled lake reflects not her form,
 For the waves roll whitening to the land,
 And dash against the shelvy strand
 There is a voice among the trees
 That mingles with the groaning oak—
 That mingles with the stormy breeze,
 And the lake-waves dashing against the rock ;—
 There is a voice within the wood,
 The voice of the Bard in fitful mood,
 His song was louder than the blast,
 As the Bard of Glenmore through the forest passed.
 “Wake ye from your sleep of death,
 Minstrels and Bards of other days,
 For the midnight wind is on the heath,
 And the midnight meteors dimly blaze -
 The spectre with his bloody hand,
 Is wandering through the wild woodland ;
 The owl and the raven are mute for dread,
 And the time is meet to wake the dead !

"Souls of the mighty ! wale and cry,
 To what high strain your harps were strung,
 When Lochlin ploughed her billowy way,
 And on your shores her Norsemen flung?
 Her Norsemen trained to spoil and blood,
 Skilled to prepare the raven's food,
 All by your harpings doomed to die
 On bloody Largs and Loncarty

"Mute are ye all? No murmurs strange
 Upon the midnight breeze sail by,
 Nor through the pines with whistling change
 Mimic the harp's wild harmony !
 Mute are ye now?—Ye ne'er were mute,
 When Murder with his bloody foot,
 And Rapine with his iron hand,
 Were hovering near your mountain strand

"O yet awake the strain to tell,
 By every deed in song enrolled,
 By every chief who fought or fell
 For Albion's weal in battle bold,—
 From Colgrach, first who rolled his car,
 Through the deep ranks of Roman war,
 To him, of veteran memory dear,
 Who victor died on Aboukir

'By all their swords, by all their scars,
 By all their names, a mighty spell !
 By all their wounds, by all their wars
 Arise, the mighty strain to tell,
 For fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
 More impious than the heathen Dane,
 More grasping than all-grasping Rome,
 Gaul's ravening legions hither come !"—

The wind is hushed, and still the lake—
 Strange murmurs fill my tinkling ears,
 Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
 At the dread voice of other years—
 "When targets clashed, and bugles rung,
 And blades round warriors' heads were flung,
 The foremost of the band were we,
 And hymned the joys of Liberty !"

TO A LADY.

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL

Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1808.

TAKE these flowers, which, purple waving,
 On the ruined rampart grew,
 Where, the sons of freedom braving,
 Rome's imperial standards flew

Warriors from the breach of danger
 Pluck no longer laurels there
 They but yield the passing stranger
 Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's hair

THE VIOLET

Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1808

THE violet in her green-wood bower,
 Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
 May boast itself the fairest flower
 In glen, or copse, or forest dingle
 Though fair her gems of azure hue,
 Beneath the dew-drop's weight reclining,
 I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
 More sweet through watery lustre shining
 The summer sun that dew shall dry,
 Ere yet the day be passed its morrow,
 Nor longer in my false love's eye
 Remained the tear of parting sorrow

HUNTING SONG

Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1808

WAKEN lords and ladies gay,
 On the mountain dawns the day,
 All the jolly chase is here,
 With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear,
 Hounds are in their couples yelling,
 Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
 Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
 "Waken lords and ladies gay"

Waken lords and ladies gay,
 The mist has left the mountain gray,
 Sprinklets in the dawn are steaming,
 Diamonds on the brake are gleaming,
 And foresters have busy been,
 To track the buck in thicket green,
 Now we come to chant our lay,
 "Waken lords and ladies gay"

Waken lords and ladies gay,
 To the green-wood haste away,
 We can show you where he lies,
 Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
 We can show the marks he made,
 When 'gainst the oak his antlers fixed
 You shall see him brought to bay,—
 "Waken lords and ladies gay"

Louder, louder chant the lay,
 Waken lords and ladies gay

Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
 Run a course as well as we,
 Time, stern huntsman! who can balk,
 Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk,
 Think of this, and rise with day,
 Gentle lords and ladies gay

THE RESOLVE

IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM
Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1808

My wayward fate I needs must plan,
 Though bootless be the theme,
 I loved, and was beloved again,
 Yet all was but a dream
 For, as her love was quickly got,
 So it was quickly gone,
 No more I'll bask in flame so hot,
 But coldly dwell alone

Not mud more bright than maid was e'er
 My fancy shall beguile,
 By flattering word, or feigned tear,
 By gesture, look, or smile
 No more I'll call the shaft fair shot,
 Till it has fairly flown,
 Nor scorch me at a flame so hot,—
 I'll rather freeze alone

Each ambushed Cupid I'll defy,
 In cheek, or chin, or brow,
 And deem the glance of woman's eye
 As weak as woman's vow
 I'll lightly hold the lady's heart,
 That is but lightly won;
 I'll steel my breast to beauty's art,
 And learn to live alone

The flunting torch soon blazes out,
 The diamond's ray abides,
 The flame its glory hurls about,
 The gem its lustre hides,
 Such gem I fondly deemed was mine,
 And glowed a diamond stone,
 But, since each eye may see it shine,
 I'll duckling dwell alone

No waking dream shall tinge my thought
 With dyes so bright and vain,
 No silken net, so slightly wrought,
 Shall tangle me again
 No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
 I'll live upon mine own,
 Nor shall wild passion trouble it,—
 I'll rather dwell alone

And thus I'll hush my heart to rest,—
 "Thy loving labour's lost,
 Thou shalt no more be wildly blessed
 To be so strangely crossed
 The widowed turtles mateless die,
 The phoenix is but one,
 They seek no loves—no more will I—
 I'll rather dwell alone"

THE DYING BARD

THE Welsh tradition bears, that a Bard, on his death bed, demanded his harp, and played the air to which these verses are adapted, requesting that it might be performed at his funeral

AIR—DAFFYDZ GANGWEN

- 1 DINAS EMLINN, lament for the moment is nigh
 When mute in the woodlands thine echoes shall die
 No more by sweet TEIVI CADWALLON shall live,
 And mix his wild notes with the wild dashing wave
- 2 In spring and in autumn, thy glories of shade
 Unhonoured shall flourish, unhonoured shall fade,
 For soon shall be lifeless the eye and the tongue
 That viewed them with rapture, with rapture that sung
- 3 Thy sons, Dinas Emlinn, may march in their pride,
 And chase the proud Saxon from Prestatyn's side,
 But where is the harp shall give life to their name?
 And where is the bard shall give heroes their fame?
- 4 And oh, Dinas Emlinn! thy daughters so fair,
 Who heave the white bosom, and wave the dark hair,
 What tuneful enthusiast shall worship then eye,
 When half of their charms with CADWALLON shall die?
- 5 Then adieu, silver Teivi! I quit thy loved scene,
 To join the dim choir of the bards who have been,
 With Lewarch, and Meiloi, and Meilm the Old,
 And sage Tahessin, high harping to hold
- 6 And adieu, Dinas Emlinn! still green be thy shades,
 Unconquered thy warriors, and matchless thy mads!
 And thou, whose faint warblings my weakness can tell,
 Farewell, my loved Harp! my last treasure, farewell!

THE NORMAN HORSE-SHOE

THE Welsh, inhabiting a mountainous country, and possessing only an inferior breed of horses, were usually unable to encounter the shock of the Anglo-Norman cavalry. Occasionally, however, they were successful in repelling the invaders and the following verses celebrate a supposed defeat of Clive, Earl of Striguil and Pembroke, and of Neville, Baron of Chepstow, Lords Marchers of Monmouthshire. Rymon is a stream which divides the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan. Cierphili, the scene of the supposed battle, is a river upon its banks, dignified by the ruins of a very ancient castle

AIR—THE WAR SONG OF THE MEN OF GLAMORGAN

- 1 RED glows the forge in Striguil's bounds,
 And hummets din, and unvil sounds,

- And armourers, with iron toil,
 Barb many a steed for battle's broil
 Foul fall the hand which bends the steel
 Around the courser's thundering heel,
 That e'er shall dint a sable wound
 On fur Glamorgan's velvet ground !
- 2 From Chepstow's towers, ere dawn of morn,
 Was heard afar the bugle-horn,
 And forth, in banded pomp and pride,
 Stout Clare and fiery Neville ride
 They swore, their banners broad should gleam,
 In crimson light, on Rymny's stream,
 They vowed, Cierphili's sod should feel
 The Norman charger's spurning heel
- 3 And sooth they swore—the sun rose,
 And Rymny's wave with crimson glows,
 For Clare's red banner, floating wide,
 Rolled down the stream to Severn's tide !
 And sooth they vowed,—the trampled green
 Showed where hot Neville's charge had been ;
 In every sable hoof-tramp stood
 A Norman horseman's curdling blood !
- 4 Old Chepstow's brides may curse the toil,
 That armed stout Clare for Cambrian broil,
 Their orphans long the art may rue,
 For Neville's war-horse forged the shoe
 No more the stump of armed steed
 Shall dint Glamorgan's velvet mead,
 Nor trace be there, in early spring,
 Save of the Fairies' emerald ring

THE POACHER

This and the following piece were published under the title of "Fragments," in the Edinburgh Annual Register of 1809

WELCOME, grave stranger, to our green retreats,
 Where health with exercise and freedom meets !
 Thrice welcome, sage, whose philosophic plan
 By Nature's limits metes the rights of man,
 Generous as he, who now for freedom brawls,
 Now gives full value for true Indian shawls,
 O'er court and customhouse his shoe who flings,
 Now barks excisemen, and now bullies kings !
 Like his, I ween, thy comprehensive mind
 Holds laws as mouse-traps baited for mankind,
 Thine eye, applaudive, each sly vermin sees,
 That balks the snare, yet battens on the cheese,
 Thine ear has heard, with scorn instead of awe,
 Our buckskinned justices expound the law,
 Wire draw the nets that fix for wires the pain,
 And for the netted partridge noose the swan,

And thy vindictive arm would fain have broke
 The last light fetter of the feudal yoke,
 To give the denizens of wood and wild,
 Nature's free race, to each her free-born child
 Hence hast thou marked, with grief, fair London's race
 Mocked with the boon of one poor Easter chase,
 And longed to send them forth as free as when
 Poured o'er Chantilly the Parisian train,
 When musket, pistol, blunderbuss, combined,
 And scarce the field-pieces were left behind !
 A squadron's charge each leveret's heart dismayed
 On every covey fired a bold brigade—
La Douce Humanité approved the sport,
 For great the alarm indeed, yet small the hurt
 Shouts patriotic solemnized the day,
 And Seine re-echoed *Vive la Liberté* !
 But mad *Citoyens*, meek *Monsieur* again,
 With some few added links resumes his chain,
 Then, since such scenes to France no more are known
 Come, view with me a hero of thine own !
 One, whose free actions vindicate the cause
 Of sylvan liberty o'er feudal laws

Seek we yon glades, where the proud oak o'ertops
 Wide-waving seas of birch and hazel copse,
 Leaving between deserted isles of land,
 Where stunted heath is patched with ruddy sand,
 And lonely on the waste the yew is seen,
 Or straggling hollies spread a brighter green
 Here, little worn, and winding dark and steep,
 Our scarce-marked path descends yon dingle deep
 Follow—but heedful, cautious of a trip,—
 In earthly mire philosophy may slip
 Step slow and wary o'er that swampy stream,
 Till, guided by the charcoal's smothering sterm,
 We reach the frail yet barricaded door
 Of hovel formed for poorest of the poor,
 No hearth the fire, no vent the smoke receives,
 The walls are wattles, and the covering leaves,
 For, if such hut, our forest statutes say,
 Rise in the progress of one night and day,
 Though placed where still the Conqueror's hests o'erawe,
 And his son's stirrup shines the badge of law,
 The builder claims the unenviable boon,
 To tenant dwelling, framed as slight and soon
 As wigwam wild, that shrouds the native fiore
 On the bleak coast of frost-barred Labrador
 Approach, and through the unlatticed window peep—
 Nay, shrink not back, the inmate is asleep,
 Sunk 'mid yon sordid blankets, till the sun
 Stoop to the west, the plunderer's toils are done
 Loaded and primed, and prompt for desperate hand,

Rifle and fowling piece beside him stand ;
 While round the hut are in disorder laid
 The tools and booty of his lawless trade -
 For force or fraud, resist nee or escape,
 The crow, the saw, the bludgeon, and the crape
 His pilfered powder in yon nook he hoards -
 And the filched lead the church's roof affords -
 (Hence shall the rector's congregation fret,
 That, while his sermon's dry, his walls are wet)
 The fish-spear barbed, the sweeping net are there
 Doe-hides, and pheasant plumes, and skins of hare,
 Cordage for toils, and wiring for the snare ;
 Bartered for game from chase or warren won,
 Yon cask holds moonlight, run when moon was non
 And late-snatched spoils lie stowed in hutch apart,
 To wait the associate higgler's evening cart

Look on his pallet foul, and mark his rest -
 What scenes perturbed are acting in his breast !
 His sable brow is wet and wrung with pain,
 And his dilated nostril toils in vain,
 For short and scant the breath each effort draws,
 And 'twixt each effort Nature claims a pause
 Beyond the loose and sable neckcloth stretched,
 His sinewy throat seems by convulsions twitched,
 While the tongue falters, as to utterance loth,
 Sounds of dire import—watchword, threat, and oath
 Though, stupefied by toil, and drugged with gin,
 The body sleep, the restless guest within
 Now plies on wood and wold his lawless trade,
 Now in the fangs of justice wakes dismayed —

“Was that wild start of terror and despair,
 Those bursting eyeballs, and that wildered air,
 Signs of compunction for a murdered hare ?
 Do the locks bristle and the eyebrows arch,
 For grouse or partridge massacred in March ?”—

No, scoffer, no ! Attend, and mark with awe,
 There is no wicket in the gate of law !
 He, that would e'er so lightly set ajar
 That awful portal, must undo each bar,
 Tempting occasion, habit, passion, pride,
 Will join to storm the breach, and force the barrier wide

That ruffian, whom true men avoid and dread,
 Whom bruisers, porchers, smugglers, call Black Ned
 Was Edward Mansell once,—the lightest heart,
 That ever played on holiday his part !
 The leader he in every Christmas game,
 The harvest-feast grew blither when he came,
 And liveliest on the chords the bow did glance,
 When Edward named the tune and led the dance
 Kind was his heart, his passions quick as thought

Hearty his laugh, and jovial was his song ;
 And if he loved a gun, his father swore,
 " 'T was but a trick of youth would soon be o'er,
 Himself had had the same, some thirty years before ' ,

But he, whose humours spurn law's awful yoke,
 Must herd with those by whom law's bonds are broke.
 The common dread of justice soon allies
 The clown, who robs the warren, or excise,
 With sterner felons trained to act more dread,
 Even with the wretch by whom his fellow bled
 Then,—as in plagues the foul contagions pass,
 Leavening and festering the corrupted mass,—
 Guilt leagues with guilt, while mutual motives draw,
 Their hope impunity, their fear the law,
 Their foes, their friends, their rendezvous the same,
 Till the revenue balked, or pilfered game,
 Flesh the young culprit, and example leads
 To darker villany, and direr deeds

Wild howled the wind the forest glades along,
 And oft the owl renewed her dismal song,
 Around the spot where erst he felt the wound,
 Red William's spectre walked his midnight round
 When o'er the swamp he cast his blighting look,
 From the green marshes of the stagnant brook
 The bittern's sullen shout the sedges shook !
 The waning moon, with storm-presaging gleam,
 Now gave and now withheld her doubtful beam,
 The old Oak stooped his arms, then flung them high,
 Bellowing and groaning to the troubled sky—
 'T was then, that, couched amid the brushwood sere,
 In Malwood-walk young Mansell watched the deer
 The fattest buck received his deadly shot—
 The watchful keeper heard, and sought the spot
 Stout were their hearts, and stubborn was their strife,
 O'erpowered at length the Outlaw drew his knife !
 Next morn a corpse was found upon the fell—
 The rest his waking agony may tell !

SONG

Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1809

OH, say not, my love, with that mortified air,
 That your spring-time of pleasure is flown,
 Nor bid me to muds that are younger repair,
 For those raptures that still are thine own
 Though April his temples may wreath with the vine,
 Its tendrils in infancy curled,
 'Tis the ardour of August matures us the wine,
 Whose life-blood enlivens the world
 Though thy form, that was fashioned as light as a fay's,
 Has assumed a proportion more round,

And thy glances, that were bright as a falcon's at prey,
 Looks soberly now on the ground,—
 Enough, after absence to meet me again,
 Thy steps still with ecstacy move
 Enough, that those dear sober glances tell
 For me the kind language of love

(The rest was illegible the fragment being torn across by a
 ricket stroke)

EPITAPH

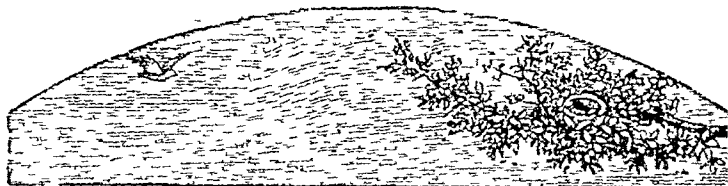
DESIGNED FOR A MONUMENT TO BE ERECTED IN CHURCH CATHEDRAL, &c. &c.
 IN OBEYANCE TO THE BEQUEST OF THE LATE MISS ANNA SWARL, TO BE PLACED AT
 THE FUNERAL PLACE OF HER FATHER, THE REV. THOMAS SWARL, A
 CANON OF THAT CATHEDRAL, IN WHICH SHE WAS BORN &c. &c.

Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1829

AMID these aisles, where once his precepts showed
 The heavenward pathway which in life he trod,
 This simple tablet marks a father's ber
 And those he loved in life, in death are near,
 For him, for them, a daughter bade it rise,
 Memorial of domestic charities

Still wouldst thou know why o'er the marble spread,
 In female grace, the willow droop'd her head,
 Why on her branches, silent and unstring,
 The minstrel harp is emblematic hung,
 What poet's voice is smothered here in dust,
 Till waked to join the chorus of the just,—
 Lo! one brief line in answer sad supplies,
 Honoured, beloved, and wept, here SWARL lies!
 Her worth, her warmth of heart, let friendship say
 Go seek her genius in her living lay





TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS OF GERMAN BALLADS

THE WILD HUNTSMAN

[This and the following ballad were first published anonymously in a small book, entitled, "The Chase and William and Helen," a collection of ballads, from the German of Gottfried Augustus Burger. Edinburgh. Printed by Mundell and Son, Bank-close, for Manners and Miller, Parliament square and sold by Cadell, jun., and W. Davies, in the Strand, London 1796 4to. It goes generally by the title, "The Wild Huntsman"]

THIS is a translation, or rather an imitation, of the "Wilde Jäger" of the German poet Bürger. The tradition upon which it is founded bears that formerly a Wildgrave, or keeper of a royal forest, named Falkenburg, was much addicted to the pleasures of the chase, and otherwise so extremely profligate and cruel, that he not only followed this unhallowed amusement on the Sabbath, and other days consecrated to religious duty, but accompanied it with the most unheard-of oppression upon the poor peasants who were under his vassalage. When this second Nimrod died, the people adopted a superstition founded probably on the many various uncouth sounds heard in the depth of German forest, during the silence of the night. They conceived they still heard the cry of the Wildgrave's hounds, and the well-known cheer of the deceased hunter, the sounds of his horse's feet, and the rustling of the branches before the game, the pack, and the sportsmen, and also distinctly discriminated but the phantoms are rarely, if ever, visible. Once, as a benighted *Chasseur* heard this infernal chase pass by him, at the sound of the halloo with which the Spectre Huntsman cheered his hounds, he could not refrain from crying "*Glück zu Falkenburg!*" [Good sport to ye, Falkenburg!] "Dost thou wish me good sport?" answered a hoarse voice, "thou shalt share the game," and there was thrown at him what seemed to be a huge piece of foul carrion. The daring *Chasseur* lost two of his best horses soon after, and never perfectly recovered the personal effects of this ghostly greeting. This tale, though told with some variations, is universally believed all over Germany.

The French had a similar tradition concerning an aerial hunter, who infested the forest of Fontainebleau.

- 1 THE Wildgrave winds his bugle horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lords pursue.
- 2 The eager pack, from couples freed,
Dash through the bush, the brier, the brake;
While, answering hound, and horn, and steed,
The mountain echoes startling wake.
- 3 The beams of God's own hallowed day
Had pruned yonder spire with gold,

You'll bell yet summons to the foe,
To-day the Warning Spirit I ear,
To-morrow thou may'st moarn it va n"—

- 10 "Away, and sweep the glades a'one!"
The Sable Hunter hoarse reply'd,
"To muttering monks leave rattling-bells,
And bells, and horns, and murtherers!"—
- 11 The Wildcrane spurred his ardent steed,
And, launching forward with a bound,
"Who, for thy drowsy priestlike rede,
Would leave the jovial horn and bound?"
- 12 "Hence, if our manly sport offend!
With pious fools go chant and pray—
Well hast thou spoke, my dark-browed friend
Holloo, halloo! and, hark away!"—
- 13 The Wildgrave spurred his courser light,
O'er moss and moor, o'erholt and hill;
And on the left, and on the right,
Each Stranger Horseman followed still
- 14 Up springs, from yonder tangled thorn,
A stag more white than mountain snow,
And louder rung the Wildgrave's horn,
"Hark, forward, forward! holla, holla!"
-

- 15 A heedless wretch has crossed the way,
He gasps the thundering hoofs below, —
But, live who can, or die who may,
Still, "Forward, forward!" On they go.
- 16 See, where yon simple fences meet,
A field with autumn's blessings crowned,
See, prostrate at the Wildgrave's feet,
A husbandman, with toil embrowned
- 17 "O mercy, mercy, noble lord!
Spare the poor's pittance," was his cry,
'Earned by the sweat these brows have poured
In scorching hour of fierce July" —
- 18 Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey,
The impetuous Earl no warning heeds,
But furious holds the onward way
- 19 "Away, thou hound! so basely born,
Or dread the scourge's echoing blow!"
Then loudly rung his bugle-horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"
- 20 So said, so done — A single bound
Clears the poor labourer's humble pale;
Wild follows man, and horse, and hound,
Like dark December's stormy gale
- 21 And man, and horse, and hound, and horn,
Destructive sweep the field along,
While, joying o'er the wasted corn,
Fell Famine marks the maddening throng
- 22 Again up-roused the timorous prey
Scours moss, and moor, andholt, and hill;
Hard run, he feels his strength decay,
And trusts for life his simple skill
- 23 Too dangerous solitude appeared,
He seeks the shelter of the crowd,
Amid the flock's domestic herd
His harmless head he hopes to shroud
- 24 O'er moss, and moor, andholt, and hill,
His tract the steady blood-hounds trace:
O'er moss and moor, unwearied still,
The furious Earl pursues the chase
- 25 Full lowly did the herdsman fall, —
"O spare, thou noble Baron, spare
These herds, a widow's little all,
These flocks, an orphan's fleecy care" —
- 26 Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey,
The Earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
But furious keeps the onward way

- 27 —“Unmannered dog! To stop my sport
Vain were thy cant and beggar whine,
Though human spirits, of thy sort,
Were tenants of these carrion kine!”—
- 28 Again he winds his bugle horn,
“Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!”
And through the herd, in ruthless scorn,
He cheers his furious hounds to go
- 29 In heaps the throttled victims fall,
Down sinks their mangled herdsman near,
The murderous cries the stag appal,—
Again he starts, new-nerved by fear
- 30 With blood besmeared, and white with foam,
While big the tears of anguish pour,
He seeks amid the forest’s gloom
The humble hermit’s hallowed bower
- 31 But man, and horse, and horn, and hound,
Fast rattling on his traces go,
The sacred chapel rung around
With, “Hark away, and, holla, ho!”
- 32 All mild, amid the rout profane,
The holy hermit poured his prayer,—
“Forbear with blood God’s house to stain,
Revere his altar, and forbear!”
- 33 “The merriest brute has rights to plead,
Which, wronged by cruelty, or pride,
Draw vengeance on the ruthless herd
Be warned at length, and turn aside!”—
- 34 Still the Fur Horseman anxious pleads,
The Black, wild whooping, points the prey
Alas! the Earl no warning heeds,
But frantic keeps the forward way
- 35 “Holy or not, or right or wrong,
Thy altar, and its rites, I spurn,
Not santed martyrs’ sacred song,
Not God himself, shall make me turn!”—
- 36 He spurs his horse, he winds his horn,
“Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!”—
But off, on whirlwind’s pinions borne,
The stag, the hut, the hermit, go
- 37 And horse, and man, and horn, and hound,
And clamour of the chase, was gone,
For hoofs, and howls, and bugle sound,
A deadly silence reigned alone
- 38 Wild gazed the affrighted Earl around,
He strove in vain to wake his horn,
In vain to call, for not a sound
Could from his anxious lips be borne

- 39 He listens for his trusty hounds,
 No distant baying reached his ears
 His courser, rooted to the ground.
 The quickening spurs unmindful bears
- 40 Still dark and darker frown the shades,
 Dark, as the darkness of the grave,
 And not a sound the still invades,
 Save what a distant torrent gave
- 41 High o'er the sinner's humbled head
 At length the solemn silence broke,
 And, from a cloud of swarthy red,
 The awful voice of thunder spoke
- 42 "Oppressor of creation fair!
 Apostate Spirits' hardened tool!
 Scourge of God! Scourge of the poor!
 The measure of thy cup is full
- 43 "Be chased for ever through the wood,
 For ever roam the affrighted wild,
 And let thy fate instruct the proud,
 God's meanest creature is his child"—
- 44 'Twas hushed. One flash, of sombre glare,
 With yellow-tinged the forests brown,
 Up rose the Wildgrave's bristling hair,
 And horror chilled each nerve and bone
- 45 Cold poured the sweat in freezing rill,
 A rising wind began to sing,
 And louder, louder, louder still,
 Brought storm and tempest on its wing
- 46 Earth heard the call,—Her entrails rend;
 From yawning rifts, with many a yell,
 Mixed with sulphurous flames, ascend
 The misbegotten dogs of hell
47. What ghastly Huntsman next arose,
 Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
 His eye like midnight lightning glows,
 His steed the swarthy hue of hell
- 48 The Wildgrave flies o'er bush and thorn
 With many a shriek of helpless woe,
 Behind him hound, and horse, and horn,
 And "Hark away, and holla, ho!"
- 49 With wild despair's reverted eye,
 Close, close behind, he marks the throng,
 With bloody fangs, and eager cry,—
 In frantic fear he scours along
- 50 Still, still shall last the dreadful chase,
 Till time itself shall have an end
 By day, they scour earth's caverned space,
 At midnight's witching hour, ascend

- 51 This is the horn, the hound, and home,
That oft the 'lated peasant hear,
Appalled, he signs the frequent cross,
When the wild din invades his ears.
- 52 The woe-ful priest oft drops a tear
For human pride, for human woe,
When, at his midnight mass, he hears
The infernal cry of, "Holla, hol!"

WILLIAM AND HELEN

In the preface to the edition published anonymously in 1878 F. C. Walter Scott says — "The first two lines of the forty-seventh stanza, describing the speed of the lovers, may perhaps bring to the recollection of many a passage extremely similar, in a translation of 'Leona', which first appeared in the 'Monthly Magazine'. In justice to himself, the translator thinks it his duty to acknowledge that his curiosity was first attracted to this truly romantic story by a gentleman, who, having heard 'Leona' once read in manuscript, could only recollect the general outlines, and part of a couplet which, from the singularity of its structure and frequent recurrence, had remained impressed upon his memory. If, from despair of rendering the passage so happy, by the poetry of another has been invaded, the translator makes the only atonement that is in his power, by restoring it thus publicly to the rightful owner."

- 1 FROM heavy dreams fair Helen rose
And eyed the dawning red
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long!
O art thou false or dead?"
- 2 With gallant Frederick's princely power
He sought the bold Crusade,
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped
- 3 With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And every knight returned to dry
The tears his love had shed
- 4 Our gallant host was homeward bound
With many a song of joy,
Green waved the laurel in each plume,
The badge of victory
- 5 And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts, and mirth, and melody,
The debt of love to pay
- 6 Full many a maid her true love met,
And sobbed in his embrace,
And fluttering joy in tears and smiles
Arrayed full many a face.

7. Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad,
She sought the host in vain,
For none could tell her William's fate,
If faithful, or if slain.
8. The marital bond is passed and gone;
She rends her raven hair,
And in distraction's bitter mood
She weeps with wild despair.
9. "O, rise, my child," her mother said,
"Not sorrow thus in vain,
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recall again."
10. "O mother, what is gone, is gone,
What's lost, for ever torn
Death, death alone can comfort me,
O had I ne'er been born!"
11. "O break, my heart, O break at once!
Drink my life-blood, Despair!
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share!"
12. "O enter not in judgment, Lord!"
The pious mother prays,
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child!
She knows not what she says."
13. "O say thy Pater Noster, child!
O turn to God and grace!
His will, that turned thy bliss to bale
Can change thy bale to bliss!"
14. "O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
My William's love was heaven on earth,
Without it earth is hell."
15. "Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,
Since my loved William's slain?
I only prayed for William's sake,
And all my prayers were vain!"
16. "O take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow;
By resignation's humble prayer,
O hallowed be thy woe!"
17. "No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain.
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again."
18. "O break, my heart, O break at once!
Be thou my god, Despair!
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer!"

- 31 "Let the wind howl through hawthorn-bush !
This night we must away ;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright ,
I cannot stay till day
- 32 "Busk, busk, and boune ! Thou mount'st-behind
Upon my black Barb steed ;
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,
We haste to bridal bed "
- 33 "To-night—to-night a hundred miles !—
O dearest William, stay !
The bell strikes twelve—dark, dismal hour !
O wait, my love, till day !"
- 34 "Look here, look here—the moon shines clear—
Full fast I wene we ride ;
Mount and away ! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed
- 35 "The black Barb snorts, the bridle rings ;
Haste, busk, and boune, and sent thee !
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee "
- 36 Strong love prevailed . She busks, she bounes,
She mounts the Barb behind,
And round her darling William's waist
Her lily arms she twined
- 37 And, hurry ! hurry ! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be ,
Spurned from the courser's thundering heels
The flashing pebbles flee
- 38 And on the right, and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view,
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,
And cot, and castle flew
- 39 "Sit fast—dost fear ?—The moon shines clear—
Fleet rides my Barb—keep hold !
Fear'st thou ?"—"O no !" she faintly said ,
"But why so stern and cold ?
- 40 "What yonder rings ? what yonder sings ?
Why shrieks the owl grey ?"—
"Tis death-bells' clang, 'tis funeral song,
The body to the clay.
- 41 "With song and clang, at morrow's dawn,
Ye may inter the dead
To-night I ride, with my young bride,
To deck our bridal bed
- 42 "Come with thy chon, thou coffined guest,
To swell our nuptial song !
Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast !
Come all, come all along !"

- 43 Ceased clang and song, down sunk the bier,
The shrouded corpse arose
And, hurry, hurry! all the train
The thundering steed pursues
- 44 And, forward! forward! on they go,
High snorts the straining steed,
Thick pants the rider's labouring breath,
As headlong on they speed
- 45 "O William, why this savage haste?
And where thy bridal bed?"
"'Tis distant far" "Still short and stern?"
"'Tis narrow, trustless maid"
- 46 "No room for me?" "Enough for both,—
Speed, speed, my Barb, thy course!"
O'er thundering bridge, through boiling surge,
He drove the furious horse
- 47 Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode;
Splash! splash! along the sea,
The steed is wight, the spur is bright,
The flashing pebbles flee
- 48 Fled past on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower,
On right and left fled past how fast
Each city, town, and tower
- 49 "Dost fear? dost fear?—The moon shines clear,—
Dost fear to ride with me?—
Hurrah! hurrah! The dead can ride!"
"O William, let them be!"
- 50 "See there, see there! What yonder swings
And creaks 'mid whistling rain?"
"Gibbet and steel, the accursed wheel,
A murderer in his chain
- 51 "Hollo! thou felon follow here
To bridal bed we ride,
And thou shalt prance a fetter dance
Before me and my bride"
- 52 And hurry, hurty! clash, clash, clash!
The wasted form descends,
And fleet as wind through hazel-bush
The wild career attends
- 53 Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea,
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee
- 54 How fled what moonshine faintly showed!
How fled what darkness hid!
How fled the earth beneath their feet,
The heaven above their head!

- 55 "Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear,
And well the dead can ride,
Does faithful Helen fear for them?"
"O leave in peace the dead!"
- 56 "Barb! Barb! methinks I hear the cock;
The sand will soon be run
Barb! Barb! I smell the morning air,
The race is well nigh done"
- 57 Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea,
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee
- 58 "Hurrah! hurrah! well ride the dead,
The bride, the bride is come!
And soon we reach the bridal bed,
For, Helen, here's my home"
- 59 Reluctant on its rusty hinge
Revolved in iron door,
And by the pale moon's setting beam
Were seen a church and tower.
- 60 With many a shriek and cry whiz round
The buds of midnight, scared,
And rustling like autumnal leaves
Unhallowed ghosts were heard
- 61 O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale
He spurred the fiery horse,
Till sudden at an open grave
He checked the wondrous course.
- 62 The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
The spur his gory heel
- 63 The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mouldering flesh the bone,
Till Helen's hly arms entwine
A ghastly skeleton
- 64 The furious Barb snorts fire and foam,
And with a fearful bound
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground
- 65 Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres fleet along,
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
And howl the funeral song
- 66 "E'en when the heart's with anguish cleft,
Revere the doom of Heaven
Her soul is from her body reft,
Her spirit be forgiven!"

THE FIRE-KING

"The blessings of the evil Genii, which are curses, were upon him"—
Eastern Tale

This ballad is written at the request of Mr Lewis to be inserted in his "Tales of Wonder," published in 1801. It is the third in a series of four ballads, on the subject of Elementary Spirits. The story is, however, partly historical, for it is recorded, that during the crusades of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, a knight templar, called Saint Albion, devoted to the Saracens, and defeated the Christians in many combats till he was finally routed and slain, in a conflict with King Baldwin, under the walls of Jerusalem.

BOLD knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
 Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear,
 And you haply may sigh, in the midst of your glee,
 At the tale of Count Albert, and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high?
 And see you that lady, the tear in her eye?
 And see you that palmer, from Palestine's land,
 The shell on his hat, and the staff in his hand?—

"Now palmer, gray palmer, O tell unto me
 What news bring you home from the Holy Countree?
 And how goes the warfare by Galilee's strand?
 And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land?"

"O well goes the warfare by Galilee's wave,
 For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have,
 And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
 For the Heathen have lost, and the Christians have won"—

A rich chain of gold 'mid her ringlets there hung,
 O'er the palmer's gray locks the fair chain has she flung:

"O palmer, gray palmer, this chain be thy fee,
 For the news thou hast brought from the Holy Countree

"O palmer, good palmer, by Galilee's wave,
 O saw ye Count Albert, the gentle and brave?
 When the Crescent went back and the Red-cross rushed on,
 O saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon?"—

"O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows,
 O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows,
 Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high
 But lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die

"The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
 It leaves of your castle but levin-scorched walls,
 The pure stream runs muddy, the gay hope is gone,
 Count Albert is prisoner on Mount Lebanon"—

O she's ta'en a horse, should be fleet at her speed,
 And she's ta'en a sword, should be sharp at her need,
 And she has ta'en shipping for Palestine's land,
 To ransom Count Albert from Soldanie's hand

Small thought had Count Albert on fair Rosalie,
 Small thought on his faith, or his knighthood, had he;
 A heathenish damsel his light heart had won,
 The Soldan's fair daughter of Mount Lebanon

"Oh Christian, brave Christian, my love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I hearken to thee:
Our laws and our worship on thee shalt thou take,
And this thou shalt first do for Zulema's sake

'And, next, in the cavern where burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Cudmians adore,
Alone, and in silence, three nights shalt thou wake;
And this thou shalt next do for Zulema's sake

"And, last, thou shalt aid us with counsel and hand
To drive the Frank robber from Palestine's land,
For my lord and my love then Count Albert I'll take
When all this is accomplished for Zulema's sake"—

He has thrown by his helmet and cross-handled sword
Renouncing his knighthood, denying his Lord,
He has taken the green caftan, and turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair Lebanon

And in the dread cavern, deep deep under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel portals surround,
He has watched until daybreak, but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on its altar of stone

Amazed was the princess, the Soldan amazed,
Sore murmured the priests as on Albert they gazed
They searched all his garments, and, under his weeds,
They found, and took from him, his rosary beads

Again in the cavern, deep deep under ground,
He watched the lone night, while the winds whistled round:
Far off was their murmur, it came not more nigh,
The flame burned unmoved, and nought else did he spy

Loud murmured the priests, and amazed was the king,
While many dark spells of their witchcraft they sing,
They searched Albert's body, and lo! on his breast
Was the sign of the Cross, by his father impressed.

The priests they erase it with care and with pain,
And the recreant returned to the cavern again,
But, as he descended, a whisper there fell—
It was his good angel, who bade him farewell!

High bristled his hair, his heart fluttered and beat,
And he turned him five steps, half resolved to retreat,
But his heart it was hardened, his purpose was gone,
When he thought on the maiden of fair Lebanon

Scarce passed he the archway, the threshold scarce trod,
When the winds from the four points of heaven were abroad,
They made each steel portal to rattle and ring,
And, borne on the blast, came the dread Fire-King
Full sore rocked the cavern whene'er he drew nigh,
The fire on the altar blazed bickering and high,
In volcanic explosions the mountains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the Monarch of Flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistinguished in form,
 His breath it was lightning, his voice it was storm,
 I ween the stout heart of Count Albert was true,
 When he saw in his terrors the Monarch of France
 In his hand a broad falchion blue-glimmered through smoke,
 And Mount Lebanon shook as the monarch he spoke --
 "With this brand shalt thou conquer, thus long, and no more,
 Till thou bend to the Cross, and the Virgin adore."

The cloud-shrouded arm gives the weapon, and see!
 The secret receives the charmed gift on his knee
 The thunders grow distant, and faint gleam the fires,
 As, borne on his whirlwind, the Phantom retires

Count Albert has named him the Paynim among
 Though his heart it was false, yet his arm it was strong;
 And the Red-cross waved faint, and the Crescent came on,
 From the day he commanded on Mount Lebanon

From Lebanon's forests to Galilee's wave,
 The sands of Samaria drink the blood of the brave;
 Till the Knights of the Temple, and Knights of Saint John,
 With Salem's King Baldwin, against him came on

The war-cymbals clattered, the trumpets replied,
 The lances were couched, and they closed on each side,
 And horsemen and horses Count Albert o'erthrew,
 Till he pierced the thick tumult King Baldwin unto

Against the charmed blade which Count Albert did wield,
 The fence had been vain of the King's Red cross shield,
 But a Page thrust him forward the monarch before,
 And cleft the proud turban the renegade wore

So fell was the dint, that Count Albert stooped low
 Before the crossed shield, to his steel saddle-bow,
 And scarce had he bent to the Red-cross his head, —
 "*Bonne grace, notre Dame,*" he unwittingly said

Sore sighed the charmed sword, for his virtue was o'
 It sprung from his grasp, and was never seen more —
 But true men have said that the lightning's red wing
 Did waft back the brand to the dread Fire-King

He clenched his set teeth, and his gauntleted hand,
 He stretched, with one buffet, that Page on the strand,
 As back from the stripling the broken casque rolled,
 You might see the blue eyes, and the ringlets of gold
 Short time had Count Albert in horror to stare
 On those death-swimming eyeballs, and blood-clotted hair
 For down came the Templars, like Cedron in flood,
 And dyed then long lances in Saracen blood
 The Saracens, Curdmans, and Ishmaelites yield
 To the scallop, the saltier, and cresleted shield,
 And the eagles were gorged with the infidel dead,
 From Bethesda's fountains to Naphtali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's plain —
 Oh, who is yon Paynim lies stretched 'mid the slain?
 And who is yon Page lying cold at his knee?—
 Oh, who but Count Albert and fair Rosalie
 The Lady was buried in Salem's blessed bound,
 The Count he was left to the vulture and hound:
 Her soul to high mercy our Lady did bring,
 His went on the blast to the dread Fire-King
 Yet many a minstrel, in harping, can tell,
 How the Red-cross it conquered, the Crescent it fell,
 And lords and gay ladies have sighed, 'mid their glee,
 At the tale of Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

FREDERICK AND ALICE

This tale is imitated, rather than translated, from a fragment introduced in Goethe's "Claudina von Villa Bella," where it is sung by a member of a gang of banditti, to engage the attention of the family, while his companions break into the castle. It owes any little merit it may possess to my friend Mr Lewis to whom it was sent in an extremely rude state, and who, after some material improvements, published it in his "Tales of Wonder," 1801.

FREDERICK leaves the land of France,
 Homewards hastes his steps to measure;
 Careless casts the parting glance
 On the scene of former pleasure,
 Joying in his prancing steed,
 Keen to prove his untried blade,
 Hope's gay dreams the soldier lead
 Over mountain, moor, and glade.
 Helpless, ruined, left forlorn,
 Lovely Alice wept alone,
 Mourned o'er love's fond contract torn,
 Hope, and peace, and honour flown.
 Mark her breast's convulsive throbs!
 See, the tear of anguish flows!—
 Mingling soon with bursting sobs,
 Loud the laugh of frenzy rose
 Wild she cursed and wild she prayed:
 Seven long days and nights are o'er—
 Death in pity brought his aid,
 As the village bell struck four.
 Far from her, and far from France,
 Faithless Frederick onward rides,
 Marking, blithe, the morning's glance
 Mantling o'er the mountain's sides.
 Heard ye not the boding sound,
 As the tongue of yonder tower,
 Slowly, to the hells around,
 Told the fourth, the fated hour?

Starts the steed, and sniffs the air,
 Yet no cause of dread appears,
 Bristles high the rider's hair,
 Struck with strange mysterious fear.

Desperate, as his terrors rise,
 In the steed the spur he hides;
 From himself in vain he flies
 Anxious, restless, on he rides.

Seven long days, and seven long nights
 Wild he wandered, woe the while!
 Ceaseless care, and ceaseless fights,
 Urge his footsteps many a mile.

Dark the seventh sad night descends,
 Rivers swell, and run streams pour,
 While the deafening thunder lends
 All the terrors of its roar.

Wearied, wet, and spent with toil,
 Where his head shall Frederick lie?
 Where, but in yon ruined aisle,
 By the lightning's flash denied?

To the portal, dark and low
 Fast his steed the wanderer bound;
 Down a ruined staircase slow,
 Next his drizzling way he wound.

Long drawn vaults before him lie!
 Glimmering lights are seen to glide!—
 "Blessed Mary, hear my cry!"
 Deign a sinner's steps to guide!"—

Often lost then quivering beam,
 Still the lights move slow before,
 Till they rest then ghostly gleam
 Right against an iron door.

Thundering voices from within,
 Mixed with pearls of laughter, rose,
 As they fell, a solemn strain
 Lent its wild and wondrous close!

'Midst the din, he seemed to hear
 Voice of friends, by death removed,—
 Well he knew that solemn air,
 'Twas the lay that Alice loved—

Hark! for now a solemn knell
 Four times on the still night broke,
 Four times, at its deadened swell,
 Echoes from the ruins spoke.

As the lengthened clangours die,
 Slowly opes the iron door!
 Straight a banquet met his eye,
 But a funeral's form it wore!

Coffins for the seats extend,
 All with black the board was spread,
 Girt by parent, brother, friend,
 Long since numbered with the dead!
 Alice, in her grave-clothes bound,
 Ghastly smiling, points a seat;
 All rose, with thundering sound,
 All the expected stranger greet.
 High their meagre arms they wave,
 Wild their notes of welcome swell;
 "Welcome, traitor, to the grave!
 Perjured, bid the light farewell!"

THE ERL KING

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE

It is necessary the reader should be informed that in the legends of Danish superstition, certain mischievous spirits are supposed to preside over different elements, and to amuse themselves with inflicting calamities on man. One of these is termed the WATER-KING, another the FIRE-KING, and a third the CLOUD-KING. The hero of the present piece is the ERL or OAK-KING, a fiend who is supposed to dwell in the recesses of the forest, and thence to issue forth upon the benighted traveller to lure him to his destruction.

O! WHO rides by night through the woodland so wild?
 It is the fond Father embracing his Child,
 And close the boy nestles within his loved arm,
 From the blast of the tempest—to keep himself warm.
 "O father! see yonder, see yonder!" he says
 "My boy, upon what dost thou fearfully gaze?"
 "O, 'tis the Erl-King with his staff and his shroud!"
 "No, my love! it is but a dark wreath of the cloud."

The Phantom speaks

"O! wilt thou go with me, thou lovelest child?
 By many gay sports shall thy hours be beguiled,
 My mother keeps for thee full many a fan toy,
 And many a fine flower shall she pluck for my boy."—
 "O father! my father! and did you not hear
 The Erl-King whisper so close in my ear?"—
 "Be still, my loved darling, my child be at ease!
 It was but the wild blast as it howled through the trees!"—

The Phantom

"O wilt thou go with me, thou lovelest boy!
 My daughter shall tend thee with care and with joy,
 She shall bear thee so lightly through wet and through wild,
 And hug thee, and kiss thee, and sing to my child!"—
 "O father! my father! and saw you not plain
 The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past through the rain?"—
 "O no, my heart's treasure! I knew it full soon,
 It was the gray willow that danced to the moon!"—

NOTES TO SMALLER POEMS

Will you St Oran's story - perusal - P 552

St Oran was a follower of St Columba and was buried at Icolmkill. He consented to be buried alive. After being in the earth three days he was dug up again, when he declared there was neither God nor devil in this universe.

And the St Fillan's story - perusal - P 555

St Fillan, an abbot of Pittenweem, gave his name to many chapels.

He came not from where I see in Moor

Ran red with blood - P 557

In the year 1554 dreadful ravages were committed in Scotland by Lord Fieris and Sir Brian Iudon. They afterwards repented the experiment, and were defeated at Ancrum Moor by Angus.

Stern Claud's plea, to the earl's father - P 563

Lord Claud Hamilton, second son of the Duke of Chateherault, and commendator of the abbey of Paisley, acted a disingenuous part during the troubles of Queen Mary's reign, and remained unalterably attached to the cause of that unfortunate princess.

Few sons have set a new world's price - P 563

This barony, stretching along the banks of the Lake, near Auchendinny, belonged to Bothwellhaugh, in right of his wife. The ruin of the manor from whence she was expelled in the brutal manner which occasioned her death, are still to be seen in a hollow glen beside the river. Popular report tenants therein the restless ghost of the Lady Bothwellhaugh. She always appears in white, and with her child in her arms.

Will I ask it rent, my secret stand - P 564

Hackbut bent, that is, gun cocked. The carbine is still preserved in Hamilton Palace.

Glencairn and stout Parkhead were his - P 564

The Earl of Glencairn was an adherer of the Regent, who George Douglas, of Parkhead, a natural brother of the Earl of Morton.

And Ioggerd Lu says in his eye - P 564

Lord Lindsay, of the Blyth, a ferocious man, who extorted Mary's signature to her deed of resignation.

I rose that far come, where's it's paid

By, blast of light fire - P 567

The barony of Pennycook is held by the tenure of the proprietor being bound to sit on the Buckstone and to blow three blasts of a trumpet, when the King shall hunt on the Borough Muir.

To Auchendinny's hazel glade - P 567

Auchendinny, on the Esche, where the author of the 'Man of Feeling' resided.

Wionow's Melville's beach, green - P 567

Melville Castle, situated on the Esche, gave the title to Lord Melville.

The spectre with his bloody hand - P 583

The forest of Glenmore is haunted by the Lhundeurg or Red hand.

On Lord Largs and Torment - P 583

Where the Norwegian invader of Scotland received two bloody defeats.

